

## GIDS TOT GROOT-DRAKENSTEIN

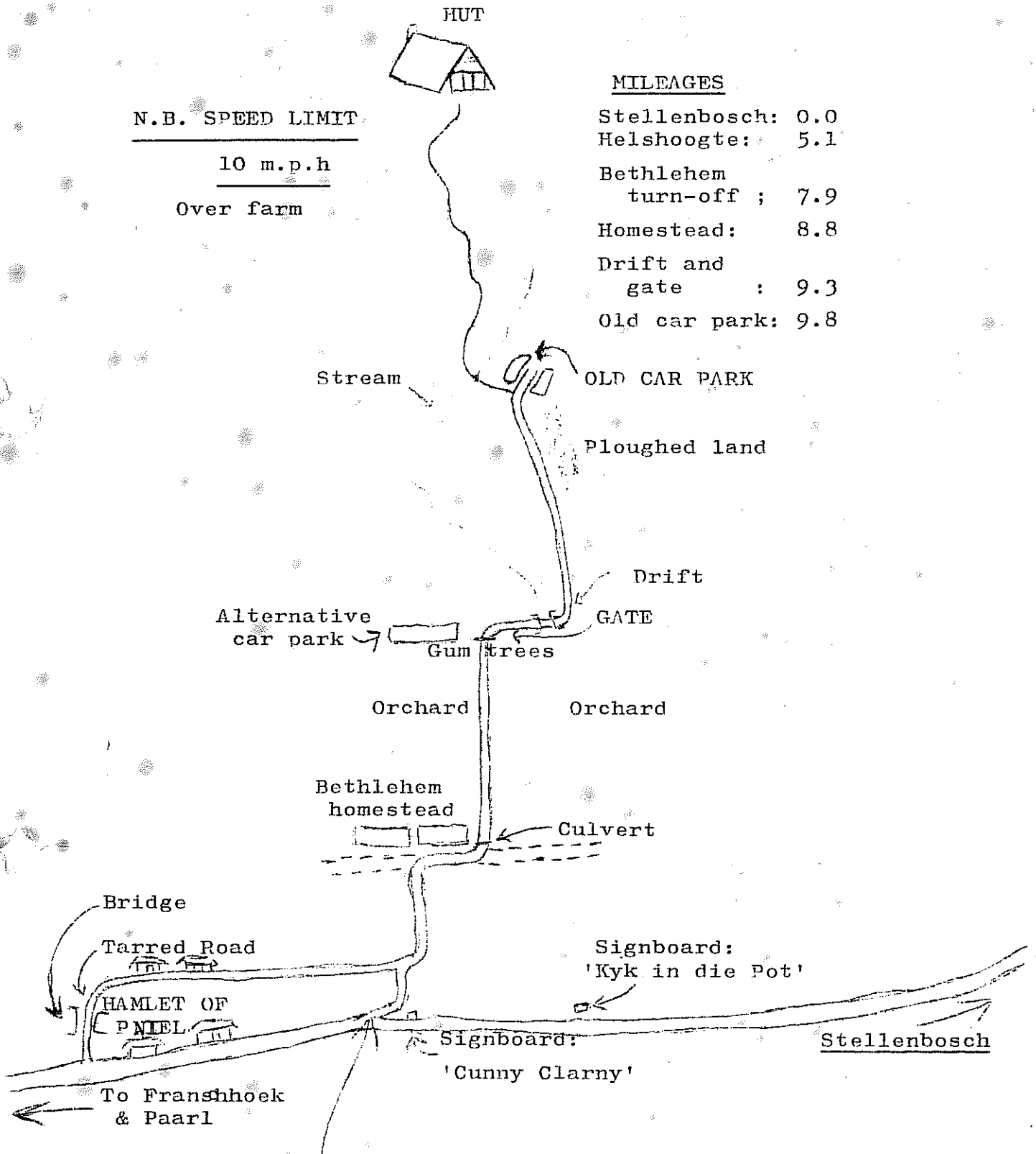
Hierdie gids dek alle bekende klimroetes tussen Hutchinson-bastion in die noorde en Banhoek-spitzkop in die suide. Die beskrywings bestaan hoofsaaklik uit uittreksels uit artikels wat in die Joernale van die Bergklub van Suid-Afrika verskyn het. Waar dit nodig gevind is, is aanvullende aantekeninge bygevoeg of plek gelaat vir aantekeninge met die oog op verdere inligting wat omtrent die roetes bekend mag word. Geselskappe wat nuwe roetes in hierdie gebied open of kommentaar op bestaande roetes wil lewer, word versoek om die besonderhede aan die Eresekretaris, Afdeling Stellenbosch, Bergklub van Suid-Afrika, Posbus 152, Stellenbosch, te stuur vir byvoeging tot die gids.

## GROOT DRAKENSTEIN GUIDE

This guide covers all known routes between Hutchinson Buttress in the north and the Banhoek Spitzkop in the south. The descriptions are mostly excerpts from articles which appeared in the Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa. Additional information is given where necessary. Parties opening new routes in this area, or wishing to comment on existing ones, are requested to submit details to the Hon. Secretary, Stellenbosch Section, M.C.S.A., P.O. Box 152, Stellenbosch, for inclusion in the guide.

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HUT OF THE STELLENBOSCH SECTION  
OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA



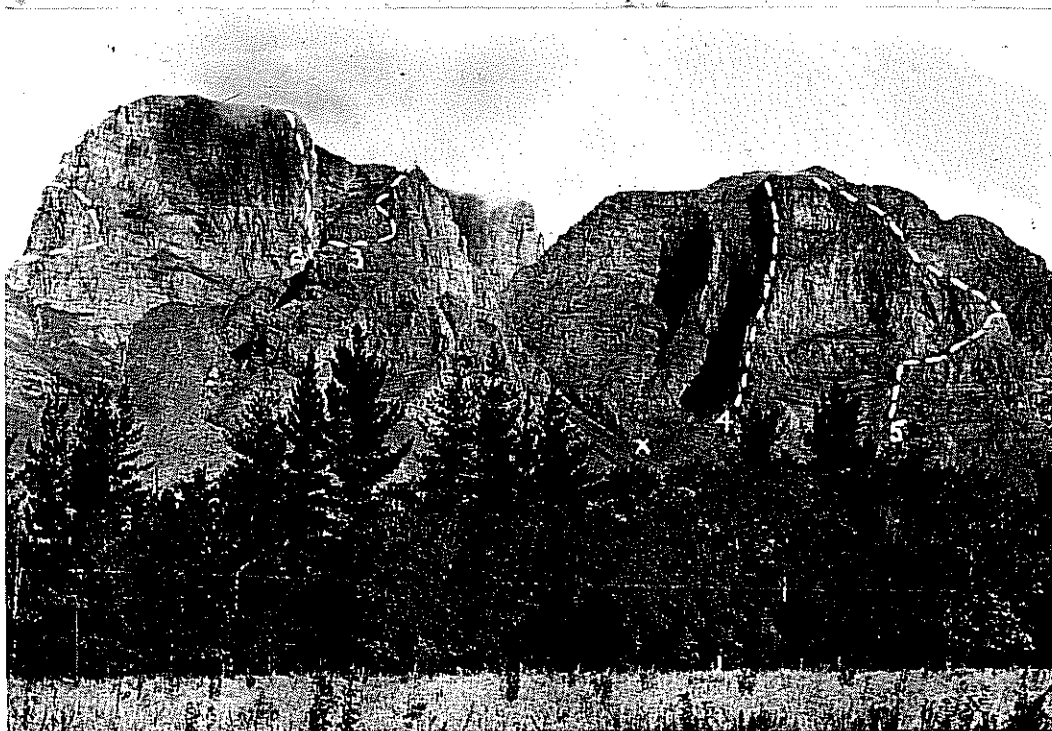
Sign: 'Private road to Bethlehem' (visible only after sharp turn-off to the right)

N.B. The direct road to Bethlehem is closed in the fruit season. Use the alternative road through Pniel then.

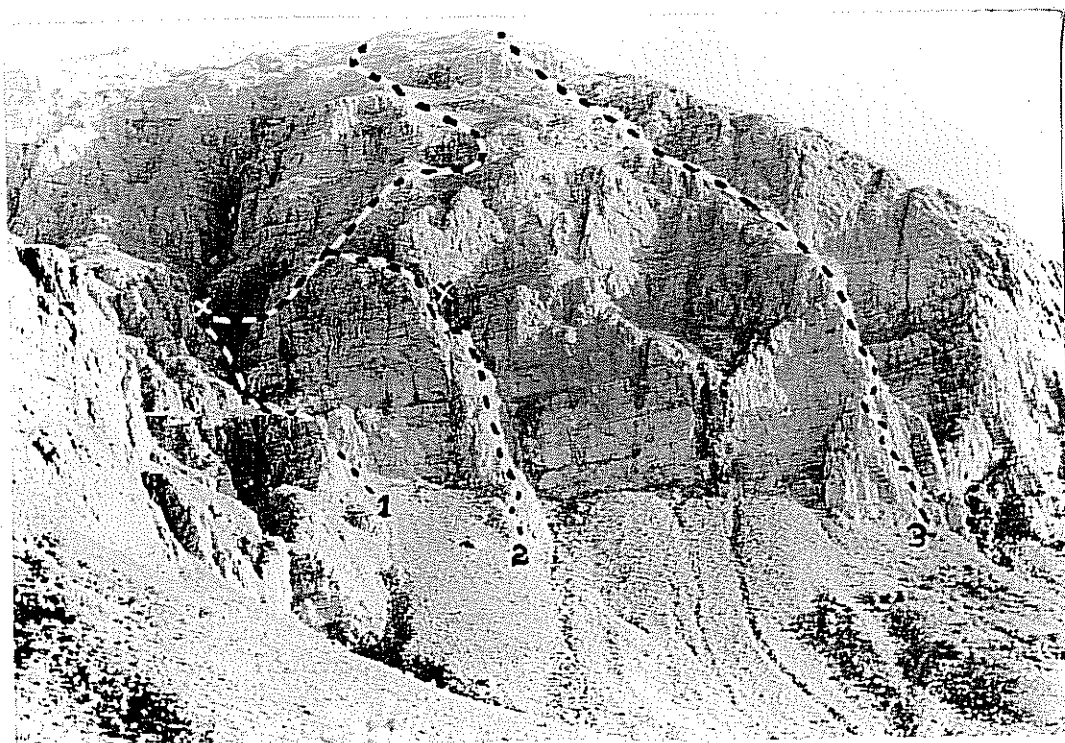


- A. DUIWELSTAND
- B. HUTCHINSON BUTTRESS
- C. DRAGOON BUTTRESS
- D. EIKENHOF BUTTRESS
- E. GROOT DRAKENSTEINPIEK
- F. BULLERSKOP

- 1. Dragoon Ridge
- 2. Dragoon Buttress "B"
- 3. Eastern Route "D"
- 4. Western Route "D"
- 5. Eikenhof Buttress "B"
- 6. Bullerskop "B"
- 7. Jettison Ridge
- 8. Central Route
- 9. Gruft's Original Frontal
- 10. Eastern Route
- 11. Mirage
- 12. Hallucination
- 13. Spitzkop Ravine
- 14. Pikadorrug



1. Groot Drakenstein Peak, N.W. Buttress (Hutchinson Butt.)
  2. Shipley's Route
  3. "C" Route on Duiwelstand
  4. Desperation Ridge
  5. Desperation Buttress
- X = Entrance to Duiwelskloof



*Bullerskop as seen from hut*

1. "B" Route
  2. Stepladder Ridge
  3. Buller's Ear & Jettison Ridge
- X = Caves

## GROOT DRAKENSTEIN PEAK: N.W. BUTTRESS

(HUTCHINSON BUTTRESS)

Description of first ascent by A.B. Berrisford, M.C.S.A.  
Journal 1934.

Groot Drakenstein Peak, besides being a most interesting mountain, is also one of the most extensive and massive peaks in the Western Province. Quite the most conspicuous of all its splendid buttresses is the great north western ridge which separates the famous Duivel's Kloof on the west from the Waterval Kloof on the east. Its magnificent skyline can be very well seen from Hellshoogte Pass, whilst any mountaineer travelling to French Hoek by rail or road cannot help being impressed by the inspiring proportions of this tremendous buttress.

For many years climbers have discussed the possibilities of this ridge as a way of climbing the peak. The only serious attempt on the buttress was made about five years ago by a strong party of Club members. They had left their camp in Waterval Kloof and without great difficulty climbed the lower portion of the buttress, until reaching the base of the most imposing middle section, an exceptionally sheer wall of some 800 feet in height. The party in question were able to get a considerable way up this middle section, but owing to extreme difficulties, coupled with bad rock and the lateness of the hour, were forced to return.

Whilst considering the possibilities of this buttress as a new ascent, I had noticed that it appeared possible to out-flank the sheer centre section by traversing across on the western side facing Simonsberg, and by so doing to ascend a number of rock barriers and gullies until it was possible to attain a good ledge, which obviously led back to the skyline of the buttress above the bad 800 foot section on the front edge.

Not until November the 25th, 1934, were we able definitely to tackle this project. Also camping at Waterfall Kloof for the night before the ascent, P.B. Crowhurst, G.H. Morton, W.J. du Plessis and the writer left before 6.30 a.m. and strode up the preliminary slopes. We reached the first rocks about 100 yards from the outermost edge of the buttress on the Waterfall Kloof side where it had been noticed that a steep green gully slanted obliquely up to the right, finishing on the crest of the buttress. The gully was found to be easy

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rockwork on the crest of the buttress in the desired direction and no real difficulties were encountered until we reached the foot of the sheer middle section which had repulsed the previous party.

As it was our desire to do the quickest possible route and as we had to be back in Town that same night, we decided not to attempt the middle section, but dropped down the slope from the base of the 800 foot wall for about 100 feet, from which point we commenced our traverse near a peculiar brown coloured 'hole' or small cave. Continuing the traverse and rising up a few feet, we came to a point where the ledge we were on diminished greatly, and necessitated our climbing down for about eight feet and climbing up just beyond, through some small trees to a fair stance 20 feet away. Beyond this traverse narrowed again and, after passing round a protruding corner, we dropped down a 15 foot crack to where the ledge broadened slightly once more. Twenty yards further on at the same level the traverse almost petered out again, forcing us to climb carefully for 80 feet or so over a big drop. The ledge broadening once more, we soon arrived at a small watercourse. Just to the left of this, we ascended an undercut break which took us up over several feet to a good resting place. Now came a short slope ending at a blank wall. Working round to the right beyond the wall, we covered about 150 feet of easy rock, finishing at a 50-foot barrier. Several possibilities appeared here, and we eventually chose a thin slit in a recess on the left of the point at which we had emerged. It was noticed that we were about 50 yards from the great blank red cliffs so noticeable from anywhere on the slopes below. Ascending the slit was found to be a ticklish bit of work, the climbing approaching "E" standard throughout. Above this, 40 feet of rather easier work carried us to a broad ledge which we could see extended right across to the left and would take us without any difficulties whatever to the prominent shoulder on the actual skyline and immediately above the 800-foot section, which we had now avoided.

It did not take us long to reach the shoulder where we halted and admired the amazing views down into Waterfall Kloof with its 300-foot waterfall, and behind us a truly magnificent view of Simonsberg with its cloud-bedecked summit.

Overhead our buttress appeared feasible and we started off on the first pitch, a 25-foot face rather undercut at its commencement. Just above we entered a gap between a big detached rock and the main face. Immediately in front were

man the leader was able to complete the crack with safety, and reached a good stance and belay 35-feet up. Our route next lay over rather easier faces for 40-feet bearing to the right into a further 15 feet crack, which proved rather awkward of completion owing to its bulging exit. Thirty feet of easier work then found us on a good ledge to the left, where we built a large beacon.

We then followed over a clean face which led to a steep wedge-shaped crack of some 30 feet. Climbing this crack we again made our exit to the left. A bushy 40-foot section was all that remained of the more difficult climbing, for we could see that only minor rockwork would carry us right up to the summit of the buttress, and the finish of the climb.

It had taken us  $7\frac{3}{4}$ -hours to complete the ascent, and we all voted it to be one of the very best days we had ever spent on the mountains.

Our next consideration being lunch, we set off in the direction of the summit of the peak, until we came to a pretty vlakte complete with wood and water. After two or three hours we headed for Waterfall Kloof and descended in good time and so to camp at 6.30 p.m.

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NOTES: It is believed that the "800' sheer section" has been climbed directly, but no details are available. (See next page)



## HUTCHINSON BUTTRESS

A variation on the North-western buttress route - The "sheer 800 ft wall", outflanked by Berrisford.

The lower sections were first climbed by Wilf Thring and W. Woodburn, November 1960. From the nek between the main ridge and the line of the subsidiary koppies beneath it, scramble up the narrow edge to where it abutts against the main face.

- (1) 80 feet 'D': Thirty feet to the left and slightly below, there is a shallow crack which is followed until it becomes possible to traverse to the left to easier rock. Follow this up to a broad and broken slanting bushy ledge.
- (2) 100 feet 'C': Follow this slanting ledge upwards to the right.
- (3) 70 feet 'B/C': Continue up and along the same ledge, until broken and bushy rock enables one to climb up to a shoulder on the crest of the ridge.
- (4) 100 feet 'D': Climb up the chimney and work upwards and slightly to the right across the bushy face. There is no good stance hereabouts.
- (5) 70 feet 'C/D': Continue up and then work slightly to the left up the recess to a shoulder on the main ridge.
- (6) 20 feet 'E': Slightly to the right of the front of the ridge there is a narrow shallow crack. After a difficult take-off this crack leads one to a broad ledge, via some pleasantly delicate face-climbing.

Follow this ledge to the right beneath the overhangs for about 200 to 300 feet. It is advisable to rope over one section. Berrisford's route is now joined just below the prominent shoulder.

Whereas the rock on the first 5 pitches should not be implicitly trusted, thereafter it is all that could be desired.

Another variation: From Devil's Tooth nek.

Berrisford's route can easily be reached from Devil's Tooth nek, by walking along the grass slope at the foot of the red wall. A short 'C' section more or less where the slope reaches its highest point then leads to the '50 ft. barrier' of Berrisford's description, where a prominent beacon below the 'thin slit in a recess' will be found. See the sketch on the next page.

### DEHYDRATE

A frontal route on Hutchinson's Buttress.

Groot Drakenstein Peak, also known as Hutchinson's Buttress, was described by A.B. Berrisford in the 1934 Journal as 'a most interesting mountain ..... one of the most extensive and massive peaks in the Western Province ..... any mountaineer travelling to French Hoek by rail or road cannot help being impressed by the inspiring proportions of this tremendous buttress'.

When looking at the photograph facing page 50 in the 1934 Journal one is struck by the great amphitheatre lying between the North-West Buttress route and the right-hand skyline on the Duivel's Tooth side. This impressive amphitheatre, up which the 'Dehydrate' route runs, is also clearly visible from the Stellenbosch/Franschhoek road. Although it is possible to slog around the slopes to the base of the amphitheatre from the Stel-Section's Banhoek Hut, it is quicker to take a farm track that leads directly up towards the Buttress. Although overgrown, the track is negotiable by car.

The rock leans back on the left-hand side of the amphitheatre forming a ramp which abuts the overhanging central sections. The route runs up this ramp for 600 to 700 feet and then swings to the right to meet the overhangs. It then continues up and back to the right for a few rope-lengths before straightening out towards the top.

Apart from one pitch of 'F' standard, where the route moves back from the central sections of the amphitheatre, the climb was of about 'E superior' standard. The rock is generally sound, but there is some bush on the lower sections. It provided Tony Chinery and me with a pleasant, though warm, day's climbing involving about a dozen pitches, many of them 150 feet long.

(B.F. Honey - 1966 Journal of the M.C.S.A.)

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NOTES:

## GROOT DRAKENSTEIN PEAK.

### (HUTCHINSON BUTTRESS)

#### SHIPLEY'S ROUTE

Description of first ascent, by O. Shipley, M.C.S.A. Journal 1938.

The left-hand branch of Duiwel's Kloof ends on a grassy saddle connecting the Devil's Tooth with Hutchinson Peak, the great north-western buttress of the Groot Drakenstein massif. From the saddle an imposing buttress runs up to the summit of Hutchinson Peak; and the fact that it had not been climbed as yet seemed to throw out a challenge which could not be resisted.

Thus, Christmas Eve, 1938, Found C.J. Foster and the writer in a pleasant little camp just below the junction of the left and right-hand branches of Duiwel's Kloof. Leaving camp at 6.10 the next morning we strolled up to the saddle, reaching it in about half-an-hour, and spent twenty minutes enjoying the view and looking at our proposed climb.

The crest of the buttress consists of two sharp ridges with a well defined gully between them, but numerous bulges and overhangs make the gully and the left-hand ridge hopeless from a climbing point of view. The right-hand ridge appeared feasible, except for the initial 200 feet, and our chances of completing the climb turned on the possibility of circumventing this section.

A little way to the right a third ridge comes down to end in a prominent knoll slightly below the saddle, and our plan was to climb this ridge for some way and then traverse across to the original ridge at the proper level. Crossing over to the knoll we started off with a "D" pitch, inadvertently omitting to build the starting beacon. Our apology to future parties must be that we conscientiously beaconsed the rest of the climb.

Following the recess to the right of the ridge we reached, without undue difficulty, a broad, bush-covered ledge which is very conspicuous from below. An upward glance convinced us that further progress in that direction was not to be thought of, so we started a traverse along a smooth sloping slab and around a corner. Future parties are warned to be careful here, as the only thing which makes the traverse obvious is the absence of an alternative. Traversing a little further we climbed a pitch of moderate difficulty, and beyond

From the stance at the bottom of this pitch it is necessary to do a highly sensational 20-foot traverse, followed by an extremely difficult descent of 30 feet over a huge drop. Here we had to cut one of our ropes to make a loop belay for the last man. A further short traverse led to the start of another pitch, this time in an upward direction, culminating in a short but awkward "dassie-traverse". Here we found ourselves on a broad ledge which took us round without difficulty onto the crest of the buttress, and landed us on a large and comfortable platform above the initial impossible section.

Above this platform we climbed some really enjoyable pitches, and as we were under the impression that the rest of the climb was easy, we actually changed into boots, a mistake we were soon to realise. For a little later we were confronted by an unpleasant-looking overhanging recess to which there was no alternative, and there was nothing for it but to change back into "tackies". This pitch is not as bad as it looks, but nevertheless the writer has no mean opinion of it, particularly in view of the fine drop underneath it.

The rest of the ridge is extremely pleasant climbing on sound rock, but a description of each pitch would be tedious and unnecessary. There are only two pitches worthy of special mention, and both are very difficult. The first one comes soon after the overhanging recess just described, and starts off with a bulging traverse leading into an undercut crack. Here the leader spent much time and trouble in trying to get started at all; and for a moment it almost seemed as though the climb had beaten us after all.

The other pitch of note is the last one; the final sections of the ridge, despite their deceptively easy appearance, still had something up their sleeve for us. This pitch starts off with a 15-foot descent, followed by a short but difficult traverse into an overhanging and bottomless crack. Forty feet of exciting climbing up this crack lands the climber on a stance where his troubles are over. From here a short rock scramble led us to the summit.

The climb is difficult and sensational, and must rank as an "E", but it can be recommended as an enjoyable ascent. An early start is essential as the climb is long, our climbing time being 10 hours. We returned to camp via Duiwel's Kloof, a long but not unpleasant descent.

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NOTES: It is believed that the section above Devils Tooth nek has been straightened, raising the standard of the climb

### DEVIL'S TOOTH.

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933.

At the entrance of Duiwelskloof stands the graceful rock tower of the Devil's Tooth (3900 feet) which provides excellent rockwork. The obvious way up it is via the steep, open slope on the left until one gains the saddle connecting the Tooth with the main mountain mass. From the saddle a traverse of 60 or 70 yards to the right leads round beyond the unclimbable krans immediately overhead to an obvious break. Here one can follow easy rock pitches, bearing gradually to the left. The route can be varied considerably for some distance but one is eventually forced towards two or three short cracks where choice is more limited. The summit can be reached, however, without encountering anything beyond "C" standard.

An alternative way of getting to the saddle - and one which is preferable to my mind, especially on a hot day - is to enter Duivel's Kloof until the foot of a gully at the back (east) of the Tooth is gained. This gully leads right to the saddle and is easy of ascent; its trees and ferns and general beauty have far more recommendation than the bare, stony slope on the other side.

The Tooth can be climbed also by a more difficult route ("D") on the right-hand (south-western) corner. The line of ascent follows the corner as much as possible but one or two traverses are necessary. Unstable rock near the top needs more than the usual care. The whole summit of the Tooth (and there is not much of it) seems to be most insecure.

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#### NOTES:

1. The gully leading to the saddle between the Tooth and the Groot Drakenstein massif has been badly eroded, and it is advisable to keep as high as possible on the slope to the right before entering the stream bed.
2. The Tooth can also be climbed directly from the saddle, thus avoiding the traverse on the northern slopes. (One or two "E" pitches).

## DUIWELSKLOOF

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933.

Immediately beyond Hutchinson Buttress on the south is the entrance to the most remarkable sheer-sided cleft known as Duivel's Kloof, which cuts deeply into the heart of the mountain to provide a most impressive and spectacular route to the peaks near its head. Ascent is not difficult, and one can with care trace an elusive footpath on the right of the stream into the narrow opening giving access to the kloof. Beautiful trees, a cascading torrent, great walls of rock towering 2,000' overhead, keep one entranced in the kloof itself and provide an antidote for any underfoot roughness.

Halfway up, progress is arrested by an apparently impassable waterfall but closer examination will reveal a way up the slabs on the left, where a combination of crevices and small cracks permits of a comparatively easy flanking movement (about "B" difficulty). (See notes). The rest of the kloof is plain sailing, consisting mostly of grassy slope. From the small saddle at the top, one can reach Groot Drakenstein Peak (4750 feet) and other summits on the left, or the double-headed Bullerskop (4600 feet) and Dragoon Peak (4200 feet) on the right. Or, further to the east, are Spitzkop (4100 feet) and Easter Peak (4900 feet), the intervening country being quite open but with numerous ups and downs.

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### NOTES:

1. A massive rock fall destroyed most of the "crevices and small cracks" on the slabs to the left of the waterfall, and although they still look deceptively easy, climbers are strongly advised to use the following alternative: Ascend the easy, broken face to the left of the fall, bearing to the right to reach a platform about halfway up. Cross the stream bed at this point, and continue straight up. Sound rock, about "D".
2. Perennial water will be found a short distance beyond the top of the kloof, where a small stream marks the start of Wolwehoekkloof.

# PREAMBLE

Duiwelskloof, Groot Drakenstein, Cape  
D. Hartley

Brian Honey and the writer set out in the early hours of April 2, 1967, with the ambitious idea of putting a route up the massive face in Duiwelskloof. At the right-angled bend in the kloof we both decided that it would be wiser to try the easier-looking left-hand edge of the face. We avoided the first section by climbing a bushy bank on the left, where bad rock compelled roping, and then by traversing to the right to reach the foot of the ridge. A better approach might be found by ascending to the saddle between the Duiwelstand and Hutchinson's Buttress and then traversing to the right. The route follows a line leading to the left-hand one of two large recesses. There are patches of bush low down, but on the whole the climb is very pleasant.

## Technical Description

Traverse on the level of the saddle mentioned above, across a shale band, to the left-hand wall of the ridge. Scramble up a 100 feet to reach the first roping pitch.

- (1) 100 feet 'E': Climb a recess. Scramble to the top of this section, then move to the left of the next buttress.
  - (2) 120 feet 'E': Climb recesses to a crack, and then climb it. Follow other cracks to a large ledge.
  - (3) 100 feet 'E': Climb a bulding face.
  - (4) 50 feet 'E': Climb a recess to the left of the stance, then move up even further and traverse to the left on a good handrail to reach a stance using a mantelshelf move.
  - (5) 100 feet 'F inf.': One is now level with a triangular overhang on the left. Climb up above a stance, then move to the left and continue up. Traverse to the left into a crack and climb it to a small stance in a recess.
  - (6) 120 feet 'E': Move diagonally to the right to an exposed corner. Traverse around the corner to a stance.
  - (7) 100 feet 'F inf.': Climb the face to the right of the recess to a small detached pinnacle. Step off this on to a small ledge on the right. Climb the overhang above, then traverse to the right and continue up to a ledge.
  - (8) 150 feet 'D': Climb diagonally to the right. Walk to the right and climb an easy gully to the top.
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### DUIWELS DIRECT

Article by B.F. Honey in 1967 Journal.

The wind had the bite of the Siberian Steppes as it moaned and whipped the cloud up from the void and across the high ground. Trees and rocks assumed ghostly shapes, faintly menacing as they faded, and then reappeared as the tendrils of the mist swirled past. It harried us as we followed the cloud down into the vlakte where we had camped a few weeks earlier. Hurrying through the enveloping mist to reach the top of the kloof before dark, incidents in our tussle with the wall surfaced in my mind.

We had lain around the flickering campfire on the vlakte after a hot afternoon spent examining the top of the face; abseiling down, and prussiking up the rope again. Between the koppies, black masses against the bright stars, we could gaze across the kloof over the Simonsberg, across the Cape Flats to Table Mountain and the twinkling lights of Cape Town, and on and on to where the sun had slid beneath the ocean. In the fading light Tony Chinery and I reminisced about the Transvaal — the crisp, clear nights at Kransberg; sweltering days in the Magaliesberg; climbers we had known and climbs we had done a long time ago. We mused how quickly the years had passed, and nostalgically contemplated a trip back to the old climbing areas in the Highveld winter. A satellite appeared out of the South Atlantic, slowly described a gentle arc across the sky, and as we chatted faded from view, high up to the north.

We decided then that we would give the face one last try. If it didn't 'go' we would swallow our pride, write off the pegs left in the wall, and forget the whole thing.

I first saw the wall when coming over the top after a climb. It soared up from the trees on the scree 2,000 feet below, sheer, ringed with overhangs at the top. Its menacing, almost physical presence threw out a challenge that had to be accepted — 'the sirens of bygone aeons' had begun to sing. I traced out one or two possible lines up the rock before continuing down to the hut. Some time later, with Tony, I walked up Duiwelskloof to view it from the bottom. We decided fairly quickly that there was a good natural line on the right-hand end of the wall, and agreed to come back in due course to give it a 'go'. Soon afterwards, we heard that another enterprising party had put a route through in the self-same place ('Lucifer', M.C.S.A. Journal 1966, p. 50).



(Duiwels Direct, cntd.)

The wall was such a formidable challenge that Tony and I decided to re-examine it to see whether there were any other weaknesses. We walked up from the hut one Sunday and focused the binoculars on the face. We imagined that we saw a possible route up the centre, running through a recess. In reply to Tony's remark that it looked as if there were steps up it, I said: 'Maybe, but if there are, then they are probably upside down!' I nicknamed the recess 'The Chinery Steps'.

We were to make six attempts at climbing the wall. In the process, we perfected a technique that enabled us to arrive at the base of the rock with our nerves in fair shape. It hinged on not looking up as one rounded the bend in the kloof, and keeping the head firmly down when angling up across the scree.

We bivouacked on the face three times and came to know its many moods. Bitterly cold when the southeaster blew the clouds down from the head of the kloof; stiflingly hot in the afternoon sun; during a warm night a gentle wind blowing across the rock; and the muted, ever present roar of the stream rising from the depths below.

Somehow one imagines a rock face to be barren and devoid of life. This is seldom the case in South Africa. The insect and animal life on the wall fascinated me. I spent long periods watching small grubs encased in shells like minute ice-cream cones, blended to the exact colour of the rock, moving slowly up and down. There were tiny grey flies that always moved either sideways or backwards, but never forwards. Five hundred feet above the scree we watched a small green frog climb carefully up a smooth, slimy wet crack and disappear from view. Someone suggested that it be invited to lead the next pitch. A pity it didn't. It would have made a much neater job than I did of leading the first pitch up the 'Chinery Steps'; which were streaming with water. On our first bivouac, we were nearly eaten alive by ants, and higher up a rat ran over us in the night. Then there were always the lizards examining us with prehistoric eyes. I watched one methodically eat a large earthworm and then carefully lick its lips afterwards. During such periods of contemplation, Tony would be either on the end of the rope below, or balancing up on the rock above.

There were also one or two moments of excitement. On one occasion, I was sitting on a stance tied to a tree, with Tony climbing up to join me, when slowly an enormous black

(Duiwels Direct, cntd.)

below, and smashed against the scree with an explosion that reverberated around the peaks.

Our fifth attempt ended with us having to abseil back down 18 pitches. The abseil down the 'Chinery Steps' was free for about 120 feet. It took us six hours to reach the scree, and as we descended we joked about being too old for this kind of lark, and that our climbing had reached a pretty low level when more time was spent going down than up. It is difficult to express the relief we felt when touching down on the scree, and it was sheer luxury swimming in the kloof and basking in the late afternoon sun.

As we ascended the wall for the last time, on this occasion with Brian Watts, I voiced the sentiments of us all when I said that the b— thing didn't get any smaller. When we came down from the heights the following day, low cloud was boiling up the kloof and rain was falling steadily.

Only the lower third of the rock was visible under the opaque ceiling. The play was over and a grey curtain had been drawn across the stage.

#### Technical description

The route starts some 50 yards to the left of 'Lucifer' (Journal, 1966, p. 50) just above some small trees at the top of the scree. The first nine pitches take a line straight up the buttress immediately to the left of that followed by 'Lucifer'. The rock is generally sound, but inevitably there are one or two loose blocks on certain pitches.

(1) 150 feet 'D': Scramble and then climb (100 feet in all) to a ledge that runs around to the face of the buttress. Traverse to the left, past a small tree, to the end of the ledge at the base of a slightly overhanging crack.

(2) 60 feet 'F': Climb the crack, moving to the left at the top to large blocks with a tree on the right.

(3) 90 feet 'F sup.': From the tree climb 30 feet directly up a thin crack to a small bush. Proceed past the bush and then climb up and to the left to a recess. Climb the recess to a large ledge. When this pitch was originally opened, one or two pitons were used to rest on. On subsequent ascents it was climbed free, using pitons for protection only.

(Duiwels Direct, cntd.)  
to reach a large tree.

(5) 110 feet 'F inf.': Move 20 feet to the left from the tree and then follow a recess that leans slightly to the right. The stance is on a small ledge.

(6) 60 feet 'F inf.': Start from the left-hand edge of the stance and climb a small recess for a few feet before moving up to the right. Traverse 30 feet back to the left above the stance and then climb up to some blocks.

(7) 80 feet 'F' and 'A2': Climb to the top of a large block that forms part of the mountain, and then traverse a few feet to the bottom of a crack with an overhang 40 feet up. Climb the crack free for about 30 feet, and then use pitons and jammed nuts (or metal spuds) to climb up and turn the overhang. Continue up for 20 feet before traversing a few feet to the left to a stance.

(8) 50 feet 'E': Move up and to the right. Traverse back to the left for 30 feet above the stance to gain a large ledge.

(9) 90 feet 'E': Climb up from the left-hand edge of the ledge, traverse to the left, and continue up past some bushes to a large ledge that runs for several hundred feet across the face. (This takes one to the top of the buttress, which is ringed with overhangs. There is a good drip 20 feet to the right which was always dripping when we were there, although it may become dry in mid-summer.)

(10) Traverse to the right along the ledge for 170 feet to the base of a short crack.

(11) 40 feet 'E': Climb the crack and the one above to reach the top of a large block. The face drops away into the kloof on the right.

(12) 100 feet 'F inf.': Move to the left for a few feet from the top of the block, then climb a crack to a ledge. Some delicate moves to the right enable one to reach the base of a crack. Climb 30 feet up the crack to a block. Traverse to the left, and climb on to the skyline.

(13) 40 feet 'F': Climb easy rock for 20 feet, then climb up and to the right for a few feet. Move back to the left and traverse into a recess with a few loose blocks in it. Climb the recess to the base of an overhanging crack.

(14) 40 feet 'F': Use a shoulder to overcome the initial difficulties of the crack. Fifteen feet up, move to the

(Duiwels Direct, cntd.)

(15) 30 feet 'D': Climb directly up to a large ledge.

(16) 60 feet 'F inf.': Descend 10 feet and then traverse to the right. Climb across the face on small grips, and then continue up to a small ledge. Balance along the ledge and then step across to the stance, which is directly above the start of pitch 12.

(17) 60 feet 'F': Move up and slightly to the right, then execute a delicate move up and into the recess above. Follow the recess 20 feet and then pull up and out to the right. Continue for a few feet before moving back to the left to a stance.

(18) 40 feet 'E': Move to the right from the stance; then climb up across easier rock to a large stance.

(19) Traverse behind the huge block at the back of the stance to another large ledge.

(20) 110 feet 'F': Climb down from the left-hand edge of the stance for 15 feet, and then traverse to the left for 50 feet until one can pull up to a resting place. Continue traversing to the left to the skyline, moving up slightly at the same time.

(21) 40 feet 'F inf.': Move to the left for a few feet, and then climb up to the right. Move back to the left and continue up to a conspicuous block on the skyline.

(22) 100 feet 'F inf.': Move 15 feet to the left before climbing up and back to the right past a block 30 feet up and directly above the stance. Climb the face above for 20 feet and then traverse around on knobbly rock to a stance at the bottom of an overhanging recess.

(23) 80 feet 'F': Pitons were used for direct aid to move off the left-hand side of the stance before commencing an exposed traverse to the left for 40 feet to the base of a recess. Climb the recess diagonally to the right for 30 feet.

(24) 80 feet 'F inf.': Move a few feet to the left from the stance, and then climb 30 feet straight up the face. Traverse to the left for 40 feet to a good stance.

(25) 50 feet 'F': We used a piton for direct aid about 10 feet up the recess. Climb straight up to a ledge that runs several hundred yards across the face beneath the last band of overhangs.

(Duiwels Direct, ctd.)

along the ledge to the left, making a few 'E'-grade moves in the process.

(29) Coil the rope, tidy up your gear, and scramble up and to the right to the top of the mountain.

NOTES:

We found duralumin spuds essential on pitch No. 7 and they were useful on the second pitch and elsewhere. A selection of nuts would be a rather less useful alternative.

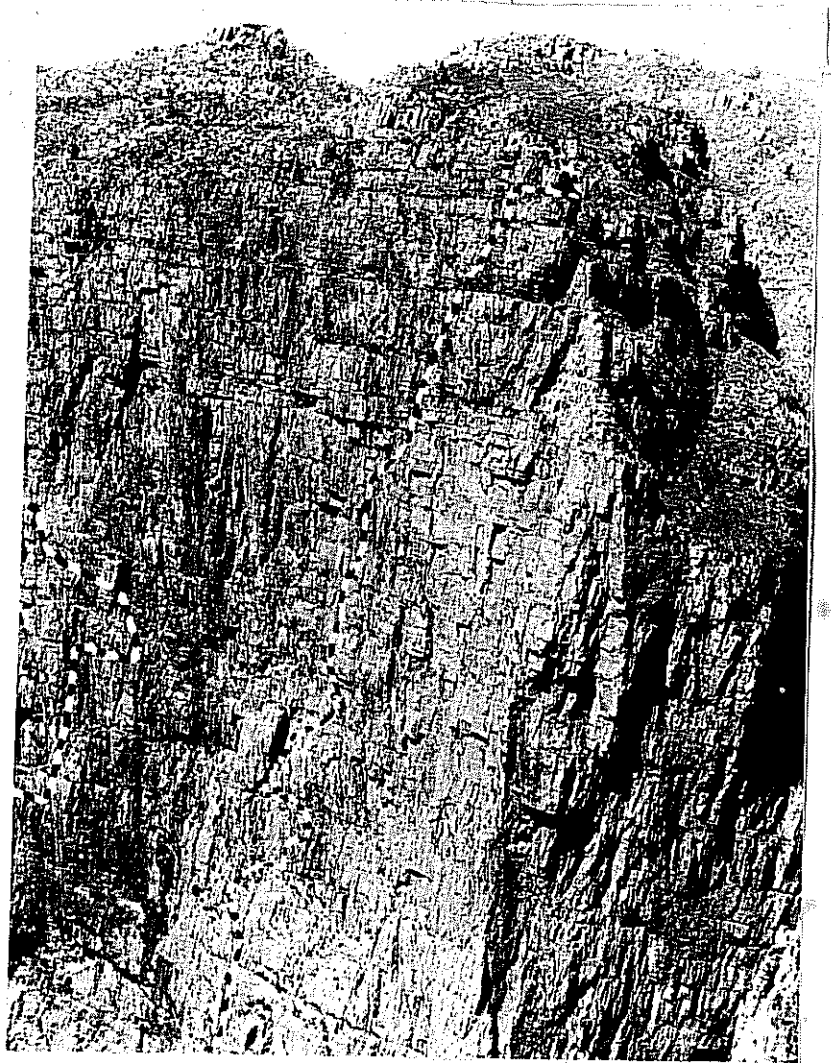
Tony and I abseiled 18 pitches, but retreat after the 20th pitch would be a long and difficult procedure.

A party of three climbed the route in two days. We were in no great hurry, for we were expecting a bivouac in any event. We carried packs and in addition wet rock slowed us down (it had rained heavily the day before). There seems to be no reason why a party of two should not climb the route in a day.

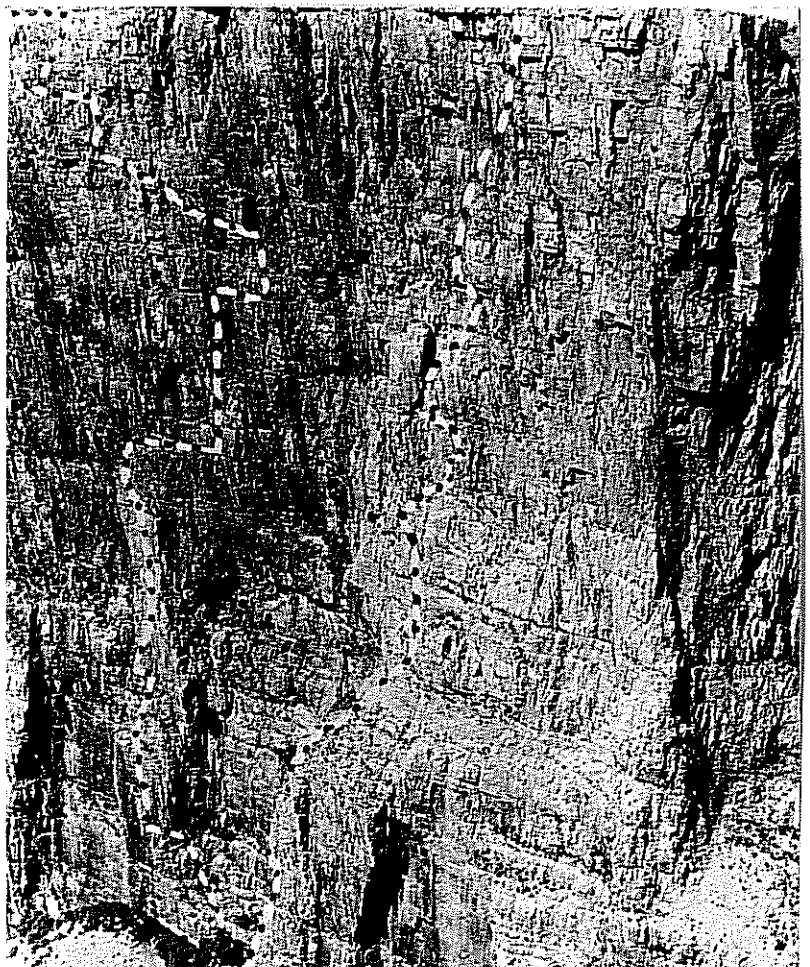
Party: A.G. Chinery and B.F. Honey, with B.F. Watts on the final ascent.

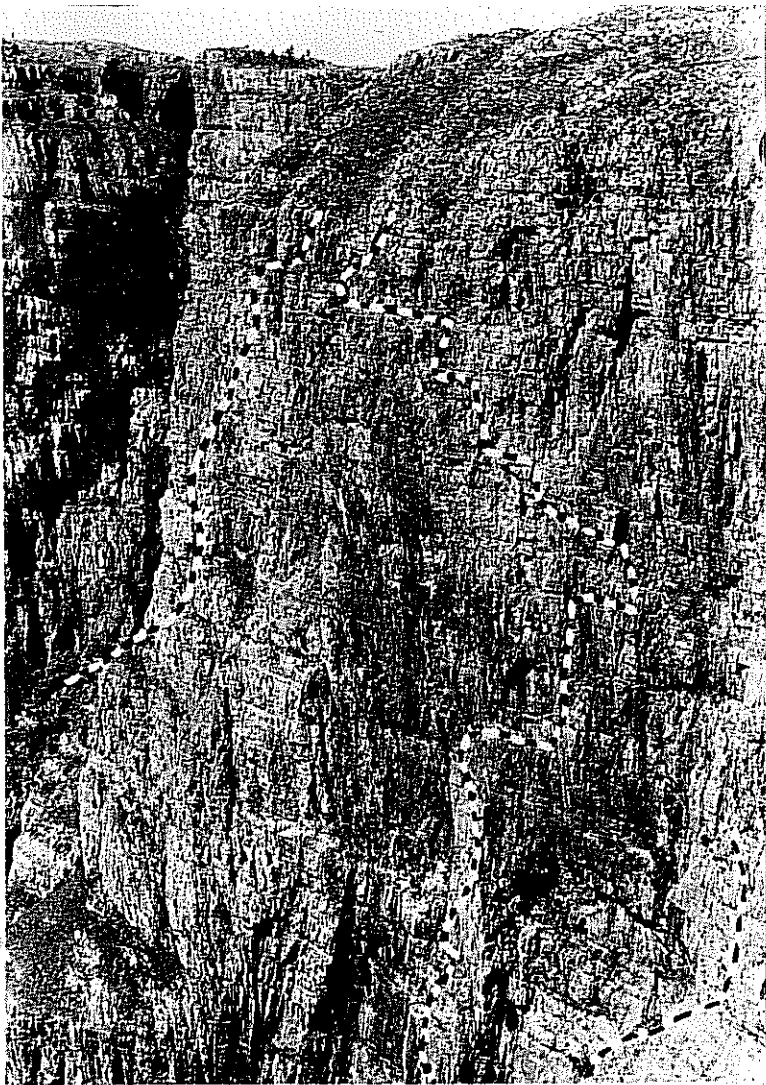
Date: Summer, 1967.

Top Sections:  
DUIWEL'S DIRECT  
LUCIFER

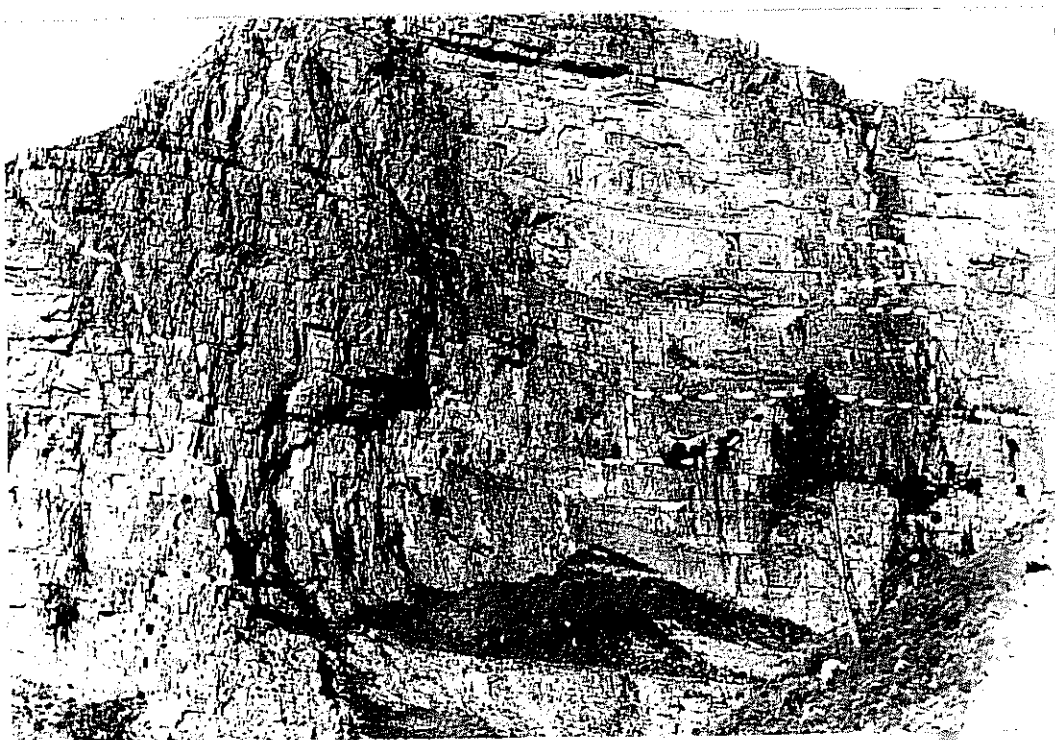


Lower Sections:  
DUIWEL'S DIRECT  
LUCIFER





Left: PREAMBLE  
Centre: DUIWEL'S  
DIRECT  
Right: LUCIFER



DRAGOON PEAK



## LUCIFER

A climb in Duiwelskloof, Groot Drakenstein.

Description of first ascent by H.F. Snijders, M.C.S.A. Journal 1966.

Duiwelskloof in the Groot Drakenstein mountains is dominated by two things. One is a bird that sports the onomatopoeic Afrikaans name "Piet-my-vrou" <sup>1)</sup>, and the other is a 1,500-foot-high wall that extends from the saddle behind the Duiwelstand to the right-angled bend in the kloof where some years ago a rock-fall demonstrated to the present generation how big screes are made.

The bird came to my notice between eight p.m. on the 9th and 5 a.m. on the 10th of December, 1966 - It did so about 45 times, I should say. It was a balmy moonlit night, and I think the wee mite had become enamoured of its own echo; so much so, that apart from a brief spell at about nine o'clock that morning, when it must have been bird-napping to gather new impetus, it accompanied every whack of our piton hammers and every tinkle of our karabiners. It was still going strong after the climb when we lost the well-beaten path to the Stellenbosch Section's hut in the dark and spent an hour or so commenting on the cat-thorns and leg-breakers of the slopes beneath the Dragoon Ridge.

I had known the wall since I first walked up the kloof some ten years ago, and I may even claim that on one occasion I looked it over from a climbing point of view. But if Marie Kotzé and I had not gone to Duiwelskloof that afternoon of the 9th to look at something quite different, and if I had not spent the last bit of daylight mooning about on the slabs at the foot of the wall, with my judgement impaired by the dusk and the lingering heat in the kloof, I might never have got beyond gaping. To a climber that wall has the allure of the sirens of bygone aeons, but very obviously so. I had no beeswax for my ears and no mast to tie myself to, so we decided to drop our other plans to see if we could not at least get up the first 300 feet of buttress.

We followed a natural line, clearly discernible from below. If I had not stubbornly insisted on aiming for what had looked like a chimney from the kloof, but in fact turned out to be an oily slit in a mirror-like face, we would not have staggered to the top at six o'clock that afternoon, parched and with our fingers snapping shut at regular intervals in an uncontrollable



St Vitus gesture caused by cramps. We had been under a broiling sun since midday. The second ascent clipped four hours off that first day's climbing time.

In brief, the face yielded a good day's climbing. Several of the pitches are long, vertical and sustained. Apart from odd bits of rubble here and there, the rock is sound and clean. The descent takes about one-and-a-half hours and entails traversing some minor peaks to the top of Duiwelskloof. The kloof is straightforward and has a number of enticing pools. We found an old campsite under the last clump of trees on the right-hand bank of the kloof, just before one reaches the waste of barren new scree. It is slightly upstream from the foot of the climb.

#### Technical description

The first pitches are on a yellowish buttress on the right-hand edge of the vast scree that covers a large part of the slope between the Duiwelstand junction and the waterfall at the bend mentioned above.

- (1) 120 feet 'D': Climb up the left-hand corner of the buttress to a good ledge under the first vertical section. Walk 15 feet to the right.
- (2) 60 feet 'E sup': Climb a shallow, vertical recess with a detached block 15 feet up it. The stance is to the right of the recess.
- (3) 60 feet 'E sup': Step down to a thin footrail five feet below the stance. Traverse to the left-hand corner of the buttress, then climb up around the corner, and continue via a hand-jam crack to easy rock. Scramble up to the next vertical step, which is directly above the crest of the initial buttress.
- (4) 100 feet 'E inf': There are two conspicuous recesses above the beacon. One is rather scruffy, the other, 25 feet to the right, clean and right-angled. Climb the latter to a broken ledge.
- (5) 150 feet 'D': Climb diagonally up to the right to easy rock, and then continue to the next vertical section. Here the stance is directly under a huge, bulging shield with a scruffy recess on its right. This recess was climbed on the first ascent. It verges on 'E superior' and is thoroughly rotten - although it appears <sup>to be</sup> the obvious way, it is not recommended.
- (6) 80 feet 'F': There is an ill-defined gendarme 25 feet to the right of the scruffy recess. Climb the right-angled recess on its right-hand side. From the top of the gendarme.

break diagonally to the left of a series of ledges.

(7) 30 feet 'D': From the highest ledge, traverse to the left into a deep chimney. Climb the chimney until it closes up. Exit through a narrow opening and climb up the outside to a stance with a small tree on it.

(8) 35 feet 'E': Climb 20 feet up the recess above the stance, then traverse 15 feet to the right to a yellow platform.

(9) 70 feet 'E sup': Climb a short face, slightly to the left of the stance, that ends in a curving track. Move along ledges to the right, then continue up a short chimney to a white rock platform. As an alternative to this pitch, continue the traverse on pitch no. 8 into a chimneylike recess. Climb the recess until it becomes necessary to move out on to its right-hand corner, then climb up to join the chimney on pitch no. 9.

(10) 100 feet 'F': Climb an ill-defined, bottomless recess almost directly above the stance. The last 15 feet of the recess forces an eight-foot traverse to the left before one can climb diagonally back to the right to a stance on a big block next to the recess.

(11) 90 feet 'F': Climb an 'open book' recess. At the top of the recess, step across to the right-hand wall to reach a good stance.

(12) 60 feet 'F inf.': Do a climbing traverse to the right along sparse holds, keeping slightly above the level of the stance. The obvious ledge lower down is a trap. Cross the big recess, then continue 20 feet to the right to a tiny stance on the corner.

(13) 70 feet 'F inf.': Climb up the corner, keeping slightly to the left of the edge. The stance is a rocky platform with some rubble on it.

(14) 80 feet 'F inf.': Continue straight up to a tiny, sloping stance 15 feet below an overhang capping a recess.

(15) 50 feet 'F': The obvious gap to the left of the overhang is filled by a short, ramp-like spur between a smooth recess and a scruffy corner. Climb a few feet up the smooth crest of the spur, then move around to the left on to sloping footholds next to a Climber's Friend bush. Climb up easier rock to an uncomfortable stance with a small tree on it.

(16) 135 feet 'D': Continue up the recess to a small ledge under an overhang, then climb diagonally to the right up a series of pleasant faces to a level ledge under an overhang.

(17) 35 feet 'E': Climb a short face to the right of the overhang, then move up through the obvious gap in the next small overhang.

until a short gully provides access through the final rock band.

Party: Henri Snijders and Marie Kotzé.

Date: December 10, 1966.

Time: On second ascent, two ropes of two:  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

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NOTES:

## DESPERATION RIDGE

A climb on Dragoon Peak.

Description of first ascent by R.W. Watson, M.J.S.A. Journal, 1939.

The ridge here described rises from the entrance of Duiwelskloof, towering above the well-known camping spot at the mouth...

On a morning of March, 1939, Dr. Einhorn, Peter Jenkin and I left camp and started slogging up the steep approach to the first main rock section of the ridge. An ascent of the front of this rock mass appears impossible, and unwilling to waste time in view of probable difficulties higher up, especially on the final section, we climbed a bushy gully round the corner to the right of the skyline. This gully detaches the whole section from the main mountain-mass. We used the gully and the rocks on its left and after a 100 feet or so of 'C' to 'D' climbing reached the skyline of the ridge. Incidentally, the rock up to this point was marked by recent boot-marks but no beacons were so far encountered. We therefore approached the next formidable section in a state of considerable uncertainty, wondering whether our predecessors had been turned back by the next section. We also wondered whether, having covered the lower sections, we would not be foiled by the towering overhangs in the last 500 feet.

It was now 8.30 a.m. In front of us rose a smooth grey slab about 100 feet square with considerable drops both to the left and right. From the camp below the slab looked impossible, but a closer inspection proved more reassuring. About 50 feet up was a tree. Once the tree was reached the section could be climbed. Accordingly, a start was made in a fault running obliquely from left to right. Thirty to forty feet of only moderate climbing brought us to a narrow ledge to the right of the tree, whence a strenuous six-foot crack, followed by a somewhat precarious traverse for 15 feet to the left, landed us at the tree - an uncomfortable place to spend any length of time! Only a 20-foot gully of moderate difficulty remained before the broad ledge above this section could be reached. There were no further signs of the rock having been climbed, and as there were still no beacons, we presumed that the ascent from now on was a new one.

There were no further difficulties for another 200 to 300 feet, and scrambling up the bushy slope we could observe the striking beauty of the country below. At the bottom right corner of

the next section is a remarkable detached pinnacle, and below it a huge chockstone spanning a gully to form an equally remarkable window. At the left corner below the ridge was another striking pinnacle with a gigantic natural rock beacon on top of it. Between the latter pinnacle and the main face we made our start on the next serious section of the ridge. But only the first 10 feet were awkward. Thereafter easy climbing and slope scrambling took us up to the final and formidable 500 feet of the climb.

The route from here is somewhat complicated, and is probably the only one that exists. We started climbing near the left-hand edge; and when the angle of the rock became steep we traversed along a narrow ledge to the right where some precarious climbing in about the centre of the section took us up to the forbidding overhangs. We had now reached the crucial point of the climb. It was 11 o'clock, and the sun beat cruelly upon us.

Directly overhead was a vertical crack or gully with bush in it, but one glance at it was enough to make one seek frantically for some other alternative. So, sending Jenkin to inspect the crack, I traversed round the corner to the left, and discovered two possibilities. Discarding the first fierce-looking gully which Jenkin pronounced as unclimbable, I tried a crack on the left corner of the ridge, but the rock was very bad. Only one way remained, still further to the left and over a most impressive drop. After many abortive attempts in this vicinity a short honeycombed face was climbed immediately under an overhang. A short traverse under the overhang was followed by good but delicate climbing for a further 50 feet in a slight recess. A small ledge over a big drop was reached after some tricky balancing. Climbing from here, although not as difficult as the previous pitch, was very exposed. The route bears consistently to the left, indeed, as far to the left as one can go. Higher up we were faced with two short cracks, the inner surfaces of which were covered with grass.

We chose the right-hand one, principally because the drop was less evident underneath it. Halfway up the crack a move was made out to the right by means of a detached block which must be used with care. After this section a long traverse is made along a grassy ledge to the right where an obvious way to the top of the peak can be found.

The climb is of 'E' standard, but only the section through the overhangs in the final belt is troublesome. From the camp below we took something over 6 hours. Probably a second visit would reduce this time considerably.

## DESPERATION BUTTRESS

A climb on Dragoon peak.

Description of first ascent by A.B. Berrisford, M.C.S.A. Journal 1934.

(The party, consisting of A.B. Berrisford, J.A. Colson, H.G. Cornish-Bowden, and W. Gravenor camped in Duiwelskloof, and left 'fairly late' on the morning of the 28th of October, 1934, anticipating the climb not to exceed 'D' standard.....)

Contouring round from our camp, we soon reached a point almost directly above a small cottage with a group of oaks growing near it, below the first slopes. As a commencement to the climb we used a shallow, open gully to the left of the actual buttress mass. This helped us up for several hundred feet until we reached a depression in the rock barrier. The very awkward tilt of the strata here caused us a deal of time and trouble before we could break through to a sloping ledge above, just to the left of a large tree. From this ledge we continued onwards for about 150 feet via a steep gully, until we were forced out to the right to a rock platform.

We now traversed across to the right for 50 yards to a small neck behind a square rock mass projecting from the buttress. A straight face of 25 feet almost above the neck then gave access to a broad ledge. Going to the right again up a short face across a small gully, and over several bits of non-descript rock, we came to a broad slope which finished up against an unpleasant-looking, bulging cliff. We, therefore, went over to the right-hand extremity on the slope and, gaining a small ledge, traversed around to the right and up a sharp edge for some 30 feet, which brought us to easier rocks at the base of a formidable-looking, whitish face. Immediately to the right a deep ravine came down, and continued upwards to a smooth-looking waterfall. Building a beacon beneath the right-hand edge of the whitish face overlooking the ravine, we climbed up on moderate rocks for some 30 feet, and then traversed to the right for about 15 feet. Some wide stretching of legs, followed by a hefty arm pull, eventually took us through between some overhangs.

Continuing the climb upwards and to the left, we soon reached a grassy stance. Now came a short face leading to a very difficult, shallow recess sloping upward slightly to the right. At the head of the recess a small gully with a few trees growing in it took us up to a moderate face which was climbed for some

30 feet to another big ledge covered with a lot of loose boulders. We now worked round to the right and up to some sloping slabs which proved a great deal more difficult than we expected. However, we soon emerged on a short slope above, followed by a few hundred feet of simple rocks on to the now easy crest of the buttress. Another slope finished at a point where the buttress narrowed down to a few feet in width, extending sheer overhead for a couple of hundred feet. A small crack starting right on the crest was ascended for 20 feet, followed by an elbow traverse to the right on to a small rock platform, and then up a couple of short difficult faces to a two-foot ledge. The way now lay up a 20-foot crack, closed at the top by a chockstone.

For a hundred feet or so easy rocks carried us up to beneath a more than sheer 60-foot arete which at first sight appeared impossible. This was undoubtedly to be the crux of the climb if we were to avoid a night out for, contrary to expectations, it was found absolutely impossible to bridge a narrow cleft of the ravine on our right which would have taken us to quite easy rocks. One or two abortive attempts were made both to the right and left of the centre arete, but were abandoned on account of the sketchiness of grips. There was nothing left but to attempt a direct way up the centre arete. The first 30 feet of climbing was fairly easy and took us to beneath an overhang. This forced us four feet out to the right, over some suspiciously delicate-looking flakes and cup-holds. Overhead the climbing became exceptionally difficult, and being slightly over the straight, the utmost care had to be exercised before the leader could reach a very narrow split in the face. A further 30 feet of exceptionally severe climbing then took him to a small resting place out of which grew one or two small trees suitable for belaying purposes. The second man, after considerable difficulty, reached the leader. The remaining two below then asked that, in order to save time, they might tie on to the rope and climb up further to the left where the face, although holdless in many places, was shorter in extent. With the use of a free end of the rope they hauled themselves up in a series of strenuous efforts and so reached the top of the section.

It was now obvious that the difficult climbing was over, so making as much haste as was possible, we struggled up a small easy gully to the right. Two or three hundred feet up we emerged on the plateau and traversed as fast as possible across

of the kloof, we travelled downwards as fast as we could, and, just after dark, tumbled into camp very tired and hungry.

The complete route must rank as a very difficult 'E' and it had taken us completely by surprise for we had fully expected to be able to outflank the upper sections, and so gain the top of the mountain by a reasonably easy route.

After a good meal we packed up hurriedly and returned down the slopes by torch light to our car which was reached by about 9.30 p.m.

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NOTES:



## DRAGOON RIDGE

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933.

To the right of Duivel's Kloof is a long wall of rock - a couple of thousand feet in height - which does not offer much prospect of a route, but at the right-hand edge of this wall is the wonderful Dragoon Ridge. This is truly a fine climb. If the whole skyline is followed conscientiously the route can be made exceedingly difficult ('E') and correspondingly sensational. On two occasions, however, we have avoided the two lowest of the main pitches by ascending a long, slanting gully to the left of the extreme edge. Higher up one has no alternative but to keep on the ridge and on one section in particular where the route goes vertically up the thinnest of edges the situations are distinctly airy. Altogether, it is an excellent way up - our alternative makes it about 'D' - which lands one not far from the summit of Dragoon Peak.....

### NOTES:

There is a way through the lower rock bands not exceeding 'D' standard: Walk along the base of rock to the skyline as seen from the hut, where just beyond it a beacon will be found below an old indigenous tree. From the tree traverse left to a blocked chimney. Climb up on the outside of the chockstones, then move right through the fissure to a stance on the other side. (Do not attempt the easy-looking wormhole below the chocks - dangerous ! ) From the stance climb up to the top of the semi-detached rock mass, step across onto the main face and climb straight up. One can then either scramble up through bush to the top of this section, or climb the prominent rib on the right. The latter alternative is of mild 'E' standard.

Pleasant 'B'/'C' scrambling leads to the second and most prominent step which, although appearing to be very steep, offers nothing more than 'C'/'D' resistance. From the top of this step one has to do a 50-foot abseil - an abseil piton will be found a few feet down. (The pitch can be climbed down, but this is not at all easy.) The small neck reached is at the top of the 'long, slanting gully' mentioned by Cameron.

The third step provides a further pitch or two of 'D' standard, after which the rock deteriorates,<sup>xx</sup> and one has to be careful not to dislodge loose boulders.

~~See sketch on next page.~~

DRAGOON RIF: Variasie van die eerste trap.

(1) 30 voet 'E' : Vanaf die begin van die eerste trajek van die oorspronklike roete (wat bo-links deur die wurm-skeur gaan) klim net regs van 'n klein vertikale krakie op, verby 'n klein boompie en regop vir 15 voet tot onder in 'n hoek wat net links en 'n bietjie hoër as 'n klein oorhangetjie lê. Klim nou dwars na regs op die oorhangetjie uit en op tot 'n lysie.

(2) 30 voet 'D'/'E': Gaan na links om die boompie en dan tot 'n lysie 12 voet hoër op. Klim skuins regs tot 'n klein to-ringkie op die hoek, en gaan nou skuins links uit en dan op na bo.

Hans Meyer, Reinhard Meyer, Vincent Swart. 27 November 1965.

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## DRAGOONKLOOF

Dragoonkloof is die steil, digbeboste kloof net regs van Dragoon Ridge. Dit is verkieslik om hierdie kloof so hoog as moontlik binne te gaan, wat gedoen word deur so lank as moontlik op die hellings links daarvan te hou.

Die eerste versperring, 'n hoë, onklimbare waterval, word bereik kort nadat mens gedwing is om die kloof binne te gaan. (Sowat 30 minute van die berghut af - die watervalle by die aansluiting van hierdie kloof en Eikenhofkloof word hier buite rekening gelaat.) Om by hierdie val verby te kom, is dit nodig om sowat 60 treë na regs te stap, tot waar 'n oop, bossigerige klofie deur die kranse breek. Hierdie klofie word dan geklim tot waar dit moontlik word om 'n betreklik-breë graslys aan die linkerkant te bereik. Hierdie lys lei na die hoofkloof terug. Dit is wenslik om skuins na links op te klouter net voordat die kloof weer binnegegaan word.

'n Aangename stap onder die groot inheemse bome deur lei na die volgende waterval (droog in die somer), wat heel links geklim word. (45 vt. 'E'). 'n Klein endjie hoër op is 'n verdere onklimbare val, maar dit is nou weer moontlik om die kloof te verlaat en by die 'B' roete op Dragoon Buttress aan te sluit; óf langs 'n rotslys wat net bokant die 45 vt. val begin, óf links van 'n onklimbare sy-klofie wat van regs af inkom. Hier die tweede ontsnappingsroete verloop soos volg: Die eerste trajek, 80 vt. 'E inf.', begin net links van die prominente, lae oorhang, en gaan dan skuins na regs uit na 'n goeie staanplek op die rand van genoemde sy-klofie. 'n Verdere 150 vt. van 'C'/'D' klouterwerk skuins na links lei dan na die hellings hoër op, waarlangs die 'B'-roete maklik bereik kan word. Ons het nie die moontlikheid om die kloof weer bokant die laaste versperring binne te gaan, ondersoek nie.

(Eerste bestyging: E. Lotz. A Visser, H. van Aswegen, R. Meyer, 3 Maart 1963)

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### AANTEKENINGE:

## DRAGOON BUTTRESS - 'B' ROUTE.

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933.

The next of our routes is round the corner, as it were, on the front of the mountain overlooking Banhoek Kloof and facing south. An uninviting, bush choked ravine (Dragoon ravine - Ed.) separates Dragoon Ridge from a long, narrow buttress which is well worth knowing. At the foot and at the top are unclimbable kranses but these can be circumvented. One starts at the bottom actually on a slope below Dragoon Ridge, and as near to the bushy ravine as is obviously advisable. As soon as one is above the level of the obstructing krans of the buttress (which may be named Dragoon buttress) a traverse across is made.

One can then proceed more or less straight up and by judicious selection of route nothing beyond 'B' difficulty need be encountered. The front of the buttress is not as sheer as distant views might indicate. The huge, overhanging krans towards the top appears to block progress entirely, but as one gets nearer it is seen that, by working up under the left-hand bottom corner of the krans, a way out round the corner exists. A short traverse to the left reveals a way up the edge of the krans, sensational and not very easy, but by following a narrow ledge still further round a quite simple line of ascent can be reached. Alternating slope and short rock pitches lead right to the top of Dragoon Peak. A knowledge of the route on Dragoon Buttress is useful in an area of mountain where easy ways of descent are the exception.....

### NOTES:

1. This route is frequently used as a quick way down to the hut, is very well beacons, and needs no further description. Parties not familiar with the area may however find difficulty in locating it from the top, especially in mist. For this reason a line of beacons has been constructed from the top of Duiwelskloof, extending right across the vlaktes to join the beacons on the 'B'-route.

2. Water will usually be found on the vlakte to the north of Dragoon Peak. The stream may however dry up towards the end of summer.

## DRAGOON BUTTRESS

### MIRAGE 'G'

Description of first ascent by Hans Graafland, M.C.S.A. Journal 1960.

On a sweltering Saturday afternoon in January, 1960, when the sweat poured freely down the workers constructing the foot-path to the proposed site of the new hut of the Stellenbosch section, our eyes again and again swept longingly up and along the huge, white face on Dagoon Peak. Through the shimmering heat-waves it looked unreal and no more substantial than a mirage.

'What about a route up there?', one overheated member was heard to exclaim.

'Well ....I see a possibility', another 'path victim' replied. And so on March 18, 1960, Henri Snijders and I ventured out to Helshoogte with the intention of 'having a whack' at the face the next day.

The following morning, however, our optimism of the previous weeks was far below par after a cold night spent out in a howling black Southeaster. At 9 a.m. we reluctantly decided to wander up to the bottom of the face in order to investigate the prospects from close at hand. Ropes were taken with us just in case! A pleasant 45 minute slog from the hut-site up K. Camerons 'B'-route on Dagoon buttress took us to the foot of the huge krans where Cameron's route veers off to the left. On arrival, we found that the wind had abated sufficiently to justify an attempt on the white face, which at this range was decidedly more substantial and 'un-mirage-like' than we had bargained for.

A long traverse to the right took us to the foot of a prominent gendarme that abuts against the face. From the top of this gendarme the face seemed to offer very serious climbing indeed, and this was confirmed after a fine lead by Henri landed us in the midst of bulges, sinister recesses and a disturbing number of overhangs.

We were delighted with the exceptional quality of the rock; for those who wish to verify this statement and to enjoy the climb, a detailed description follows.

#### Technical description

(1) Where Cameron's route veers to the left, traverse to the right to the foot of the gendarme. This involves an 80 foot

well-marked 'C'/'D' climbing traverse.

- (2) 70 feet 'E': Climb the white rib in the recess on the left-hand side of the gendarme and move out to the right near the top.
- (3) 100 feet 'E': Scramble up 15 feet, traverse to the right for 30 feet, and climb the lichen-covered, right-hand corner of the gendarme.
- (4) 30 feet 'D': Climb the short face to the top of the gendarme.
- (5) 60 feet 'G' (Crux): From the platform, a 15-foot hand-traverse to the left along a high, horizontal crack, with irregularly placed holds, lands one on a foot-wide ledge where the arms may be rested. Climb the obvious recess to the left, where a sound piton halfway up safeguards the leader. Move to the left out of the recess near the top to a small, airy stance. The recess involves strenuous climbing.
- (6) 40 feet 'F sup.': Traverse six feet to the left into a recess directly overhead, climb the recess, and then move out to the right and up and across an awkward bulge to a foot-wide, sloping ledge.
- (7) 50 feet 'E sup.': Traverse 30 feet along the ledge to the extreme right-hand end, and then climb the recess which leads to a comfortable stance.
- (8) 75 feet 'F': This pitch is the key to the climb. Climb upwards diagonally to the left until an overhang is reached. Semi-hand traverse for 15 feet to the left until the overhang terminates: an awkward mantleshelf takes one into an easy recess leading to a good stance.
- (9) 80 feet 'E': Traverse to the left and climb the recess to the right of a sharp rib.
- (10) 70 feet 'E inf.': Traverse to the left for 10 feet and then continue upwards on the sharp rib until a cave is gained. From the cave traverse to the left for 100 feet and scramble for 200 feet on 'B'/'C' standard rock to the top.

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NOTES:

## DRAGOON PEAK.

### HALLUCINATION 'G'

Description of first ascent, by H. Graafland, M.C.S.A.  
Journal, 1961.

Our dream of a route up the middle of the huge, white amphitheatre on Dragoon Peak was described by Lotzie as a hallucination. When Henri Snijders and I climbed 'Mirage' in March, 1960, on the left-hand extremity of the amphitheatre, we discussed the possibility of a 'föhre' through the centre, but at the time, after a few glances, we congratulated ourselves on being where we were. Yet from the new hut it did not look to bad. 'Just like Right Face on T.M.', Lotzie assured us, 'full of honeycomb grips'. We looked at him with suspicion. Was our 'doyen' exercising some crafty rockmanship, and playing on our ego? Cautious we were, and more cautious we became, but there was no easy way out, for if we did not try it, surely some 'eager beaver' from the City was bound to hear of it and snatch a beautiful route away in front of our eyes. We couldn't let that happen, so forward!

On Friday afternoon, November 17, 1961, Henri and his wife rounded me up in Stellenbosch. It was already hot at 6 a.m. the next morning when we trudged up the 'B'-route (Dragoon Buttress) to the foot of the huge krans where the 'B'-route veers off to the left. At 7.30 a.m. we changed our boots for kletterschuhe and traversed to the right, skirted the gendarme (see 'Mirage') at its base, scrambled up a little, and then traversed another 250 feet to the most promising line of weakness. Three fine pitches of increasing difficulty on wonderful rock took us through the first rock band. From here it was all agony and frustration for the next few hours.

We tried to break through in several places - to the left of the black streak, underneath it, but all to no avail until Henri's happy intuition led us to the right through the difficulties via a classic pitch complete with handswing. Everything now looked hopeless. To the right, useless! Straight up, never! Down again? Not yet! Eventually a long, obscure traverse, which might be a path to nowhere, was attempted - and climbed. That was that for the day, for however much we battled we just could not get through the 100-foot bulge above. Retreat. We gave up, dog-tired, after twelve hours of tough battle. Operation abseil! A flurry in the dark and we arrived back at the hut just in time for the A.G.M. of the Stel-

lenbosch Section. After the fatigue and wine, we were hard put to keep our wits together in order not to vote for all the candidates who were nominated for the committee.

Next Sunday we were back in the arena, this time armed to the teeth with pounds of assorted pitons and étriers. If all else failed, we were resolved to try with the ironmongery. Determined, Henri and I climbed rapidly to the highest point we had reached the week before. Although it was a scorching day, the amphitheatre luckily keeps the shade until about 2 p.m., a pleasant contrast to the Klein Winterhoek Frontal route !

After a brief palaver, we selected a 'break' through the 100-foot bulge, bristling with overhangs stretching right across the whole width of the amphitheatre. Before mechanizing ourselves we decided to put all we had into an attempt to find a 'free' way through. With infinite care Henri commenced with a strenuous take-off and I watched him climb up a little before moving round a corner out of sight. 'What can you see ?' 'Not too bad higher up', floated down from above. I knew what that meant ! A super optimist, Henri's 'not too bad' means the prospects are practically hopeless. My doubts were allayed when I received the signal 'You can climb', and after a few mixed severe and delicate moves I joined him in a small niche. 'Next go for you' he grinned, 'up over the flakes above and then left to the projecting rib', he added as an afterthought. As this direction seemed less unfriendly than the other points of the compass, I was forced to agree. A pull-up on small grips and a mantleshef movement led to the top of the round, sloping flakes which had a bulge above that tended to push one out. With the help of some strong language and enthusiastic hammerwork I managed to whack in two shaky pitons for a running belay. A few moves over the bulge to an overhang, a stretch to the left to maximum extension and there, thank goodness, diligent searching revealed some concealed holds. The foot-grips being scarce, the next moves had to be made in rapid succession. 'Lotzie, where the hell are your honeycomb grips', I thought, 'just one and you can keep the rest! Then my hands got hold of a mossy flake and hanging on to this flake for dear life, I swung out to the left to a foothold on the edge of the rib. The next 15 feet were easier, and rather played out I arrived on a two-foot wide ledge that seemed as spacious as a hockey field. Amazing how a few brief moments can be crammed with enough sensation to last a lifetime!

A few grunts and yells from below indicated that Henri



exceedingly severe and that we had climbed to our limit.

Cold lemon tea restored us somewhat, and everything being relative, we made good speed over the next pitches which, in comparison, seemed to provide only minor difficulties. At 3 p.m. we built the summit beacon and celebrated with a tin of fruit. Relaxed, we descended the 'B'-route, re-living in conversation the more sensational moments of our new 'sestogrado'.

Technical description:

(1) Where Cameron's 'B'-route veers to the left, traverse to the right to the foot of the gendarme. This involves an 80-foot 'C'/'D' climbing traverse. Skirt along the base of the gendarme, scramble up some 50 feet, and then continue along the base of the amphitheatre to the most obvious line of ascent, where a beacon will be found.

(2) 70 feet 'F inf.': From a small, rocky platform, 25 feet higher, traverse 20 feet to the left, and then climb to a ledge via a crack formed by a block leaning against the face.

(3) 45 feet 'F': Walk to the right along the ledge for 60 feet. Ascend a flake by means of a semi-layback move and a mantelshelf move. Traverse to the right and continue up the fault. Climb 12 feet to the right, up a face involving delicate climbing, to a good stance.

(4) 85 feet 'F sup.': Climb the recess above the tree. Traverse out to the right near the top to a stance.

(5) 115 feet 'F sup.': Follow the beacons on the wide ledge, leading to the right, past a black streak, to a chimney-like recess. Climb the recess for 60 feet and then handswing out to the right. Continue up another 60 feet to a small stance.

(6) 30 feet 'E inf.': A few feet to the right, climb the fault to a ledge.

(7) 100 feet 'F': Traverse to the left to the end of the ledge. From the top of a triangular block traverse to the left until it is necessary to move up three feet to reach a handrail. Semi-hand traverse a few feet, and then continue to the left to a small overhang. Step down on a block to gain a ledge.

(8) 30 feet 'D': Traverse 20 feet to the left, and climb up an obvious break. Traverse to the right along a rock ledge to the right-hand extremity.

(9) 30 feet 'G': From the end of the ledge, lean across to the right. Pull up and around the bulge using two finger-grips for the left hand above the head and a vertical grip for

(10) 45 feet 'G': Climb three feet to the right and then up over projecting flakes to a footrest. Move up to the overhang, and then traverse to the left on sparse grips to a flake (exceptionally severe). From the flake swing down to the left to reach a foothold on the rib. Climb up to a two-foot wide ledge.

(11) 50 feet 'F': Traverse 35 feet to the left (watch for a loose block perched on the ledge) until the ledge broadens. From this point climb for 15 feet up the vertical face.

(12) 70 feet 'F inf.': Traverse to the watershoot on the right, cross it, move up a few feet, and then step into it. Climb up to a cave.

(13) 50 feet 'F': From the cave, climb up the left-hand rib and over a detached block until it is possible to step across the top of the cave to a stance on the right.

(14) 100 feet 'C': Scramble to the top.

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NOTES:

## EIKENHOFKLOOF

Vanaf die Banhoekhut volg die Dragoon Buttress paadjie vir 5 minute, waar mens dan regs afdraai met die waterpyp-paadjie. Na 2 minute is mens in die kloof en 5 minute later by die waterpyp waterval (60 vt.). Stap ongeveer 50 treë terug en klim dan na regs (rigting as mens stroom op kyk) uit vir sowat 100 vt. en volg dan 'n bossieagtige lysie na die top van die waterval. Onmiddelik hierna volg 'n 15 vt. 'C'-klim teen 'n mosagtige plekkie uit, en 2 minute verder in die kloof op is mens onder die Disa-waterval. Dit is 'n mooi breë waterval bestaande uit twee groot trappe; 60 vt. en 50 vt. Die eerste trap kan links, teen die wortels van 'n groot boom, uitgeklim word ('D'), en die tweede trap kan direk geklim word ('D'). Na sowat 25 minute kom mens by 'n groot waterval met 'n wigklip daarin, en moet mens 50 treë in die kloof afgaan en links om deur die ruigtes beur om die waterval te omseil. Tien minute verder volg 'n 20 voet 'C' waterval en 5 minute later is daar 'n watervalletjie wat probleme bied. Aan sy linkerkant is daar 'n sy-watervalletjie waar mens m.b.v. 'n ander se skouers kan uitklim en dan vir hom help van bo af.

Hierna is daar geen probleme meer nie en na nog sowat 25 minute se klim in die kloof op tot by die Duiwelskloofnek-Dragoonkloof paadjie.

Die klim neem ongeveer twee tot twee en 'n half uur en water vind mens tot amper bo. Gedurende die klim het mens ook 'n mooi uitsig op die 'Hallucination' en 'Mirage' rotsklimme.

Soos hierbo beskryf is die klim-gradering van die kloof 'n 'D'.

Eerste bestyging deur Reinhard Meyer en Vincent Swart.

AANTEKENINGE:

## EIKENHOFKLOOF

Beskrywing van eerste afklimroete deur V.P. Swart, Joernaal van die B.K.S.A., 1965.

In die 1933 joernaal skryf K. Camron: „Immediately to the right of Dragoon Buttress is a deep ravine, waterfall-obstructed and bushy, which may or may not be climbable. Personally I have not investigated its possibilities, but it does not look attractive”.

Hierdie aanhaling, en om 'n lekkerder afklimroete as Dragoon Buttress te vind, was die redes waarom R. Meyer en die skrywer die kloof op 8 Januarie 1966 gaan deurkyk het. Diegene wat al Dragoon Buttress op 'n warm somersmiddag leer ken het, sal dit verstaan ! Van Cameron se woorde „it does not look attractive” was geen sprake nie; intendeel, dit is 'n pragtige kloof wat op plekke baie nou word en daarby is daar nog disas te sien ook.

Dit is egter wenslik om 'n tou saam te neem aangesien die watervalle dan net geabseil kan word.

Hier volg 'n beskrywing van 'n afklimroete wat op 'n somersdag as 'n alternatief vir Dragoon Buttress gebruik kan word.

Volg die Dragoonkloofnek-Duiwelskloofnek-paadjie tot by die top van Eikenhofkloof en stap dan skuins links af tot in die stroombedding. Gaan in die stroombedding af (die eerste paar watervalletjies bied geen probleme nie) en na sowat 20 minute en nog 'n waterval (15 vt. 'C') is daar weer 'n waterval waar daar oor 'n wigklip geabseil moet word (25 vt.), of anders kan 'n mens regs om deur die ruigtes gaan om honderd treë laer af weer in die kloof te kom. Na 'n verdere 20 minute in die kloof af, beland mens by die Disa-waterval. Daar is twee 50-voettrappe wat 'n mens sonder moeite kan abseil, alhoewel 'n mens maklik van hier af by die Dragoon Buttress-paadjie kan aansluit deur na regs oor die hange te gaan. Indien die abseil gedoen is, volg kort hierna 'n kort waterval (10 vt., 'C') en direk hierna die ,waterpypwaterval'. Hierdie waterval kan op twee maniere aangepak word. 'n Mens kan of links om, vir ongeveer 20 treë, langs 'n bosagtige lysie dwarsklim en dan na die kloof afsak, of die waterval kan geabseil word (60 vt.) Na 'n paar minute se stap in die kloof af, draai daar 'n paadjie na regs uit, wat jou na vyf minute se stap by die Banhoekhut bring.

Die kloof moet in nat weer vermy word. As die stroom sterk vloei, sal daar ook ekstra probleme wees.

## EIKENHOF BUTTRESS.

### 'D' - ROUTE

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933.

Immediately to the right (east) of Dragoon Buttress is a deep ravine, waterfall-obstructed and bushy, which may or may not be climbable. Personally I have not investigated its possibilities but it does not look attractive. The splendid buttress next on the right appealed to us far more. This is Eikenhof Buttress (above the farm Eikenhof), and like many similar places seems to offer no prospect of a route at first glance. More detailed examination, however, shows that it is climbable, in fact we have found two more or less distinct routes up it. Both of these, however, are good 'D' climbs, and simplification, if at all possible, would involve so much traversing as to render the route unworthy of attention at all.

On a recent occasion we went up as much as practicable on the left-hand edge of the buttress and found it an excellent 'D' climb. Five hundred feet or so from the top we were forced round to the right, under a great overhanging face, into a wide recess where the ascent could be made to deteriorate into a mild 'A'. There is, however, ample scope for deviation on to interesting rock. We found the whole route really good, if a bit strenuous.

The top of the buttress connects with a high ridge leading off the back (north) of Dragoon Peak and overlooking the upper reaches of Duiwelskloof, the base of which can be reached quite easily.....

### NOTES:

It is almost impossible to pin-point these climbs from the description alone, but the photograph facing page 36 of the 1933 Journal does give some idea as to their whereabouts. It is almost certain that the left-hand route (called 'Western route' by Cameron) follows the ill-defined ridge to the left of the open gully in the centre of the buttress (as seen from the hut). The position of the right-hand route (called 'Eastern route' by Cameron) is less certain, but it is believed to follow the similarly ill-defined ridge to the right of the aforementioned gully.

### Western route:

This route provides an interesting and pleasant way up to /the

high vlaktes, and can also be used as a quick way down to the hut. The first pitch, an open recess of rather good 'D', will be found immediately to the right of the crest of the ridge. Traverse left from the top of the pitch, and from the stance gained climb the easy 80-foot face directly above. A short slope then leads to the next rock band, where one is forced to the right if climbing of a high standard is to be avoided. The first easy break through is provided by a short chimney-wormhole, some 50 yards to the right. (The above three pitches are usually avoided when descending by crossing the stream bed high up and working down the opposite slopes.)

A short slope, followed by pleasant 'B'/'C' scrambling, then leads to the one pitch which cannot be avoided, a 30-foot face on brown rock. The position reached is below the solitary pine tree which from the hut appears to be on the left-hand skyline of the buttress, near the 'great overhanging face' mentioned by Cameron. A walk to the right along a grass ledge leads to the 'wide recess' where the ascent "could be made to deteriorate into a mild 'A'".

Water will usually be found in the pleasant little vlakte a few minutes beyond the summit of the buttress. From there to Duiwelskloof nek is a walk of some 45 minutes.

## EIKENHOF BASTION

### 'B' - ROETE

Hierdie roete begin in 'n kort, steil klofie (Duidelik sigbaar vanaf die hut en regs daarvan is 'n kort, prominente bastion), ongeveer halfpad tussen die hut en Piet-my-vroukloof. Laasgenoemde kloof is die kloof tussen Eikenhof Bastion en Bullerskop. Die bos in die klofie kan gedeeltelik vermy word deur van die rots van die wand aan die linkerkant gebruik te maak.

Die kolfie lei na 'n kort grashelling, waarop die roete na regs swaai om verby die steil kranse te kom. Dit word spoedig moontlik om teen 'n maklike hang op te klim, en wanneer verdere kranse die weg versper, swaai die roete weer na links, om langs 'n aantal lyste 'n vlak, oop klofie ongeveer in die middel van die bastion te bereik. Nou volg die roete die maklike rug net regs van hierdie oop klofie, en alle rotswerk kan deur kort dwarsklimme vermy word. Hoër op word mens verplig om oor ietwat blootgestelde lysies skuins na regs uit te klim, maar wanneer die terrein nót te steil begin word, word die situasie deur 'n gerieflike rotslys gered. Deur hierdie lys na links te volg, kan die 'wide recess' van Cameron se roetes bereik word. Slegs kort stukkies klouterwerk en 'n lang grashelling is dan al wat oorbly.

Weens die onsekerheid wat daar oor Cameron se klimme op hierdie bastion bestaan, is dit moontlik dat dele van hierdie roete van sy 'Eastern Route' gebruik maak.

Eerste bestyging . E. Lotz, H. van Aswegen, A. Visser.  
29 Oktober 1961.

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### AANTEKENINGE

### PIET-MY-VROUKLOOF

Description of first ascent by G.M. Spottiswoode, M.C.S.A.  
Journal 1961.

...This particular river has 12 waterfalls, from 30-footers with only nuisance value, to great and beautiful 200-footers ranging from the unclimbable to others that present no problem. To be more explicit, this kloof lies between Buller's Kop and Eikenhof Peak in the Groot Drakenstein Mountains and, owing to the remarkable rock structure near the top, we propose to name it Volstruiskloof. (see Note (1))

K. Cameron mentioned in the 1933 Journal that the kloof at that time had not been climbed and, as we could find no record of a subsequent ascent, Peter Carpenter, Brian Spottiswoode and I set out during Easter 1961 from the Banhoek Hut at the reasonable hour of 7.30 a.m.

We trudged up the slopes of Buller's Kop to the right of the kloof and, after rounding a shoulder, dropped into the kloof above the first three waterfalls. The first of these is easy to by-pass, the second should be possible, but as the third looks too big a problem, all three have to be avoided.

In the kloof one is immediately surrounded by age-old indigenous trees sheltering the fern and moss-covered boulders beneath. Through gaps in the trees only the tremendous white face on the south side of Eikenhof Peak on the left and the jagged cliffs of Buller's Kop to the right are visible. Soon we reached waterfall no 4, but as it is only a mere 20 feet high it is easily turned on the left. So far so good. A short distance further the main stream turned sharply to the right, and 20 yards on we were confronted by a shallow pool at the bottom of a dark and slippery waterfall in a narrow chasm. Not so far, and not so good.

Forced to retrace our steps to the bend in the stream, we proceeded a short distance up the tributary to the left where a break-through presented a possible way through. We built a beacon and struggled up a 100-foot 'D' grade pitch (See note (2)) to a broad, bushy ledge. Following the ledge to the right until it petered out, we climbed a short 'C' pitch to a ledge leading to the top of the waterfall. We peered gingerly over the edge, and saw that the waterfall fell into a small pool. This was certainly not the pool at the bottom of the dark and slippery waterfall that forced our deviation earlier, so we were forced to the conclusion that we could only see



half of its full length. This makes waterfall No. 5 at least 150 feet high.

After moving on up the kloof, we were soon in retreat from an insolent 30-footer (No. 6). We retraced our steps to where we re-entered the kloof above waterfall no. 5, climbed out to the right, (i.e. to the left as you look upstream), scrambled up a short gully, and traversed to the left along a bushy ledge. As we rounded a shoulder, a distressing, but beautiful sight met our startled gaze. The river cascades at least 200 feet down moss-covered ledges into a sunny, rock-strewn pool. Underneath terrific overhangs topping a huge, white face to the left of the waterfall, there is a narrow slit of a cave. This is the face and cave that look so fascinating from the valley below. Filled with curiosity, we scrambled up to the left of the face and traversed past some trees into the cave. Coleridge's lines about Xanadu and the 'caverns measureless to man' were recalled by looming overhangs above, the smooth vertical face below, the waterfall tumbling and cascading into the pool on the left; and across the valley from the entrance, Simonsberg, framed on both sides by Buller's Kop and Eikenhof Peak. This cave must be Xanadu.

The cave itself is fairly constant 10 feet high, at its deepest 30 feet long, and at least 100 feet wide. After tearing ourselves away, we moved out to the right until the cave narrowed to a small dassie traverse directly over the highest section of the faces below. The traverse broadened out into a ledge running across the waterfall, the negotiation of which required a tricky step-over that should not be attempted when the stream is flowing strongly. The ledge continued, somewhat overgrown with bush, for some distance to the right to a rock leaning against a short wall. A 'C' grade pitch disposed of the wall thus enabling us to traverse to the left back into the kloof to an attractive lunch-spot just above the waterfall.

The kloof at this point was quite shallow and crammed with lush Cape mountain vegetation at its best. The short waterfall ahead was easily circumvented on the right, but soon it was necessary to uncoil the rope for No 9, an 80-foot waterfall in a crack. A good 'D' pitch on the right-hand wall solved this problem. The kloof now narrowed to a gorge containing the final three waterfall obstructions. No. 10 inched by on the left; a cold-looking pool reminded one of the penalty awaiting a fall from the tiny grips. After a glance

After casting about for an alternative we struggled up on the right using our lovely Cape flora, which at that moment was our only link with terra firma. More struggling to the left took us to an open ledge leading back into the stream bed at the foot of the twelfth and last waterfall.<sup>(4)</sup> A 60-foot pitch ('C') up a crack led to a bushy ledge which we followed to the left until a 60-foot 'D' pitch up the line of least resistance led to the top.

The kloof was now like any other - a slog, with the compensation of fine views into the Franschhoek valley.<sup>(5)</sup> It was 6 p.m., and we were faced with the descent of Dragoon Buttress in the dark with only one very tired torch. Beckoning us below was the hut - and more coffee!

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#### NOTES

(1) This kloof has always been known as 'Piet-my-vrou=kloof'.

(2) 5th waterfall: The 'D' grade pitch can be avoided by climbing a large rooi-els tree higher up in the gully.

(3) 11th waterfall: 15 feet 'E', diagonally up the left wall and into the top of the water chute.

(4) 12th waterfall: An impressive 200-footer falling into a small sheer-sided amphitheatre. Climb an obvious crack up the left wall (the bulge is easily turned) and then go a little to the right through the bush to a tiny cave. (110 feet 'C/D') Now move out to the right and up a few easy rock patches (110 feet 'B/C'). The stream above the waterfall is now easily reached by going to the right over the grass slopes.

(5) Misprint in the Journal. Should read Banhoek Valley.

BULLER'S KOP: 'B' ROUTE.

Note by C.M. Spottiswoode, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1960.

There is an easy ('B' grade) route up Buller's Kop from the north side which should prove very useful as it is the only easy route on the peak accessible from the hut of the Stellenbosch section.

Looking at the peak from the hut site one sees, about a third of the way up to the skyline ridge from the kloof between Eikenhof Peak and Buller's Kop, a short gully to the right of a small spur. The route starts up this gully and leads into a shallow kloof for about 300 feet until one sees a black face flanking the kloof on the right. By skirting below this face to the right and scrambling up one comes on to the main slopes of the mountain, whence the route to the top is straightforward. As the route is composite it is not easy to find the way down if one does not know it well. With a view to descent, therefore, the route has been well beacons. The beacons start on the north side of the west ridge leading from the lower summit.

In the shallow kloof mentioned above, there is a magnificent cave. It is about at the level of the black face and to the left of the kloof. Somewhat reminiscent of the Kromrivier Klipgat in the Cedarberg, this cave has a level, soft, sandy floor capable of sleeping at least 20 people comfortably, a high roof, abundant slangbos for bedding, and nearby in the kloof there is a waterfall that appears to be perennial. The cave could not be better sheltered from bad weather. The only signs of previous human habitation were three small stones at the corners of a triangle surrounding some old coals buried several inches beneath the fine sand falling from the roof. The simple fireplace is typical of the Coloureds and probably dates back to the days of the buchu gatherers. I rather imagine the cave has since gone unnoticed because it is not visible from below.

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NOTES:

It is just possible that the above route is Cameron's 'Western Route' (1933 Journal), the description of which corresponds remarkably with Spottiswoode's 'B' route. The photograph facing p. 36 of the 1933 Journal, however, shows the 'Western Route' much further to the right, in fact near

(Buller's Kop 'B' route, cntd.)

the right-hand skyline as seen from the hut.

Cameron's description of his Western Route reads as follows:

"... Then we come to the huge mass of mountain known as Buller's Kop, probably the most conspicuous feature in a district of striking mountains. This is in reality a splendid double-headed peak (altitude about 4,600 feet) providing wonderful climbing possibilities. So far, we have been up three different routes on its mile and a half frontage of bastions above the farm Dwarsriviershoek.

"The first of these, which may most conveniently be described as the Western Route, lies well around to the left, in places overlooking the deep ravine just referred to. (I.e. Volstruiskloof). This route is somewhat involved, but most interesting. It starts in a short, steep gully, and, from the shoulder at the head of this, a long watercourse rising sharply in a narrow cleft is attained. Eventually the cleft widens out, and a choice of routes is available: to the left up one or two smooth and awkward waterfalls on to a long ridge; or traversing out to the right to an area of slope and short rock pitches. The alternatives converge higher up and non-descript climbing takes one to the more southerly of the two summits of Buller's Kop. The whole route would be classed as 'C' or 'D'.

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BULLER'S KOP: STEPLADDER RIDGE ('E')

AND JETTISON RIDGE ('F').

Description of first ascent by C.M. Spottiswoode, M.C.S.A.  
Journal, 1961.

After spending most Saturday afternoons over a period of two months sweating under the summer sun working on the new Banhoek Hut, we felt that what we knew of the tops of the mountains above us was dangerous. So one Sunday morning in April, 1960, found Anthony France and me having breakfast at the hut site with every intention of putting the matter to rights.

Assuming that we should not be able to find a foot of virgin mountain anywhere in the vicinity, we turned our thoughts to the easy route up the north side of Buller's Kop. Over breakfast we discussed the probable line of the route, packed our sacks, climbed to the top of Buller's Kop, walked round to the top of Duiwelskloof, and descended via Dinosaur Buttress to find three well-known members of the Stellenbosch Section visiting the hut site. These, on hearing our story, promptly told us to include a note in the Journal describing the route, which we duly did (1960 Journal: 'B' route on Buller's Kop).

So, we discovered, Banhoek was not so well trodden and explored after all! Thereafter, on Saturday afternoons we unfailingly gazed up at the mountains, avidly searching for possible new routes. But it was not until February, 1961, that any of our dreams were realized. Then it was that Wilfred Thring and I set out to 'look at' the right-hand side of the largest face of Buller's Kop visible from the hut. This face looked pretty impregnable except for the right-hand edge, where a ridge runs diagonally to the right, ending halfway up the face. Undeterred by the gloomy prophecies of rotten rock made by a party at the hut, we set off boldly to test our hunch.

JETTISON RIDGE: The ridge, topped by an immense boulder quite 50 feet high, turned out to be completely separate from the face. A variety of easy and interesting composite routes exist up this diagonal ridge and up the gully between it and the face, and a pleasant 'E'-grade pitch with sudden exposure leads to the top of the boulder.

Now what could the prominence on the side of Buller's head be called other than an ear? So Buller's Ear this

(Buller's Kop: Jettison Ridge, cntd.)

prominence had to be.

From the top of the Ear the immediate outlook changed: as the face immediately above us looked forbidding with its overhangs, it had to be the ridge to the right of the face. How to reach the ridge was the sixty-dollar question. We mulled over the problem between sips of tea and eyed the future speculatively. Fortified, we braced ourselves and overcame the obstacle by climbing up to a tiny but adequate niche beneath the overhangs. The next pitch was the crux of the climb — a traverse to the right involving a very delicate (fortunately, piton-protected) move leading to the ridge. Three most enjoyable pitches up the ridge then led to the end of the rock.

Alas! The tea enjoyed on top of Buller's Ear turned out to be the last that day, for a badly packed pocket of the rucksack strewn various items of equipment, most of which we were able to retrieve, all over the climb. Needless to say our tin of tea was not among the items recovered.

As it was a blisteringly hot February afternoon, we chose the quickest available way down from the top of the rock; that is, the traverse to the left along bush-covered bands to the cave that is visible from the car park. Fortunately there is what appears to be perennial water near this cave, and from the cave there is an easy route down (the 'B' route).

Why is it that caves seem to be sprinkled around in the mountains with such little regard for the convenience of climbers? It is an irony of fate that when a cave is really required, to shelter in during a rainstorm, for example, nothing larger than a dental cavity can be found. But in areas where one would be quite sufficient they seem to honeycomb the place — on Buller's Kop there are no fewer than three habitable caves, all with water, situated within a radius of 500 yards of each other. There is the one mentioned above, that described in the 1960 Journal, and the cave called 'Xanadu'. (See descriptions of 'B' Route and of Volstruiskloof.)

Feeling that the climb deserves a more fitting approach to the final five pitches, a 'winter-rusty' party set out in August and climbed straight up Buller's Ear on the outside. These new pitches are included in the technical description that follows:

- (1) 30 feet 'B': Directly below the top of Buller's Ear,

(Buller's Kop: Jettison Ridge, cntd.)

(2) 30 feet 'D': Ascend the crack for a few feet, traverse to the corner on the right, and climb up through a tree.

(3) 60 feet 'E inf.': Bear up slightly to the right to the red overhangs. A tricky traverse to the left leads to a bushy crack. Six feet up the crack, follow a ledge to the left, to a small stance at some blocks.

(4) 70 feet 'E': From the blocks on the ledge, climb up using both sides of a loose-looking but firm flake. Traverse to the left underneath the overhangs, and then move diagonally to the left to an open-book recess which is climbed on the right-hand face. Scramble 20 feet straight up to a beacon.

(5) 60 feet 'E sup.': Move up 12 feet on loose blocks; a tricky traverse 10 feet to the left then leads to a ledge with some small trees. Climb a few feet on tiny handholds, traverse to the corner on the left, and continue up on small grips to a stance on a ledge.

(6) 50 feet 'E': Traverse 20 feet to the right on the stance ledge. Climb to a narrow ledge leading to the left, and proceed up to an open-book recess. A mantelshelf movement to the left out of the recess deposits on on a good ledge.

(7) 30 feet 'F inf.': Climb diagonally up and to the left along the sloping ramp. A piton-runner was inserted to protect the leader over an eight-foot traverse, mostly on diminutive handholds, leading to the corner on the left.

(8) 30 feet 'E inf.': After a tricky take-off near the beacon around the corner, climb diagonally to the left to the nek between the Ear and Buller's Kop proper.

(9) 70 feet 'E': Traverse to the right a few feet below the level of the nek; this involves a step-over and a traverse around the corner using an excellent handrail. The exposure is considerable. Continue by following the crack leading to the top of Buller's Ear. A record tin will be found in the beacon. Abseil directly on to the neck from a convenient boulder.

(10) 60 feet 'E inf.': Traverse 20 feet to the right, past a tree, to a beacon. Ascend the large, pointed flake to a niche under the overhangs.

(Buller's Kop: Jettison Ridge, cntd.)

end of the ledge. A piton-runner was placed at this point. Continue on at the same level using small footholds and scanty hand-grips. Proceed to a beacon on the ridge. (A direct belay may be given to members of the party by the leader climbing up and doubling back to the left along a large flake.)

(12) 110 feet 'D': Follow the obvious route to a bushy stance straight above.

(13) 40 feet 'E': Climb a strenuous crack to a small, triangular stance.

(14) 60 feet 'E': Tricky and strenuous climbing up a crack and face on the left, followed by easy rock, leads to the top of the climb.

On the whole, the route is clean, pleasant and on sound rock. For long country climbing there is surprisingly little scrambling.

STEPLADDER RIDGE: The Buller's Ear and Jettison Ridge routes lie up the right-hand edge of the large cliffs visible from the Banhoek hut. These frightful faces terminate on the left in a watercourse, which spawns a waterfall at some times of the year, coming down from the cave mentioned above. This waterfall is flanked by, on the left, a long sweeping ridge, and it is up this ridge that our second route lies.

During November, my brother Brian and I overestimated the length of this ridge, with the result that we were back at the hut in time for one o'clock lunch. The route provides a pleasant way up Buller's Kop; it joins the easy route about halfway up the mountain, and the cave mentioned above provides an ideal 11 o'clock tea-spot.

The appearance of the ridge inspired the name 'Stepladder Ridge'.

(1) 40 feet 'E': Although the pitch up the first rock face may be easily avoided, it is worth doing. After starting at the beacon, move a few feet diagonally to the left to a block at the bottom of a narrow crack. Climb the crack using small grips. Scramble up about 150 feet on easy rock to a tree at the foot of a chimney.

(2) 60 feet 'D': Climb the chimney, traverse to the left along the ledge and then



(Buller's Kop: Stepladder Ridge, cntd.)

(3) 70 feet 'D': Proceed straight up using the obvious cracks. Scramble 120 feet up to the bottom of a bushy chimney. From this ledge it is possible to traverse to the waterfall and, if lucky, find water.

(4) 90 feet 'D': Avoid the bush in the chimney by climbing up on the right. Work back into the chimney and continue up.

(5) 50 feet 'E': Climb diagonally up to the left to reach a nose, and then continue straight up.

(6) 40 feet 'E': Ascend the shallow crack for 12 feet. A tricky traverse a few feet to the right is followed by a strenuous move up.

(7) 60 feet 'E': After a short scramble, climb straight up using the chimney at the top.

(8) 40 feet 'D': A short scramble leads to a 40-foot 'D'-pitch straight up the ridge.

Although the rock on the lower pitches is sound, this is not the case on the last two pitches, and it would be better to avoid the latter by scrambling to the cave up the gully to the right of the ridge.

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NOTES:

## JETTISON RIDGE: VARIATION ON FIRST SECTION.

C.M. Spottiswoode, Geoff. Ward, Jeanne Daneel.

Immediately to the right of Buller's Ear a very steep gully comes down, dividing the very lowest band of rock into two buttresses. To the right of the more prominent one is a larger and also very steep kloof. The variation starts up the smaller left-hand buttress (this is a short distance to the left of a very prominent chimney on the right-hand buttress), and after the first band of rock (pitches 1 and 2) crosses over to the main ridge on the right, above the forbidding red overhangs of the right-hand buttress.

(1) 35 feet 'E/F': Climb up a delicate face to beneath the overhang. Using the left-hand face, climb up the recess to the ledge on the right.

(2) 35 feet 'E/F': Climb diagonally to the left to a ledge on the corner. Bypass the small overhang either on the left or on the right.

Scramble 120 feet up and to the right, across the gully to beneath the main ridge. Traverse to the right through the trees to a beacon at the bottom of the recess opposite the free-standing tower.

(3) 60 feet 'E': Climb the recess, which higher up narrows to an awkward crack. Climb this and exit to the left to a ledge with a small tree on it.

(4) 60 feet 'E': Climb the recess until it is blocked by overhangs. Exit to the left and climb some 25 feet diagonally to the left to a ledge.

(5) 80 feet 'E': Climb diagonally to the right to the corner. Move up the recess to the blocks, and from the largest of these a delicate move round the corner to the left brings one to a recess with some trees.

(6) 100 feet 'D/E': Climb on to the corner on the right and continue straight up.

Scramble up the ridge, traverse to the left, and climb the chimney (30 feet 'D'). Climb up some 15 feet. This brings one to between pitches 11 and 12 of the original description.

## BULLER'S KOP: CENTRAL ROUTE ('D').

Extract from article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933:

..... Then there is the Central Route. The main objective of this is the attaining of the most prominent of the ridges on Buller's Kop; this may be described as the south-west skyline of the peak as seen from Dwarsriviershoek. At the bottom this ridge drops away in great, impracticable-looking cliffs, and one has to look some distance to the right for a reasonable commencement. This is found in an inconspicuous cleft which provides a way through the lowest belt of krans at its narrowest point. The cleft may be located directly below a series of steeply-sloping grass shelves which show up prominently just below and to the right of the great top kranses of the mountain.

Once up the cleft, which is easier than it appears from a distance, one works up to the left on to a narrow shoulder, across a steep gully and so on to the main front. The route then slants upwards, still diagonally to the left, over successive grassy ledges and short, steep pitches until the edge is gained. If one has followed the natural line, the resulting position will be below a long line of kranses 150 to 200 feet in height. The only reasonable-looking way up is at a point where a tongue of slope runs up for fifty feet or so, about 50 yards to the right of the edge. Here one can get on to a narrow ledge and a delicate traverse to the left round this leads to a sensationally-situated gully where bushes are both a help and a hindrance. Difficulties disappear above this and the remainder of the route to the summit should present no serious obstacles. The whole route would be classified as 'D'.....

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NOTES:

BULLER'S KOP: FRONTAL ROUTE ('F').

Description of first ascent by A. Gruft, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1955.

On the left-hand side of Banhoek Kloof, near its mouth, lies Buller's Peak, which, when viewed from the vicinity of Oak Tree Camp\*, presents an imposing front, not unlike the south face of the Witteberg in appearance. Up the centre of this face rises a steep ridge providing the obvious frontal route up the peak. The week's Varsity holiday in early May found Bill Turner and the writer firmly ensconced at Oak Tree Camp, gazing hungrily around for good climbing. On our first day we decided to reconnoitre the ridge by climbing K. Cameron's Central Route on the peak, which would give us a good idea of what difficulties lay ahead. From it we saw that an overhanging step on the lower sections, and the start on the upper sections, would probably give us most trouble, but that the rest looked relatively straight-forward. On the 4th May we succeeded in climbing the ridge. Excepting the first pitch, the quality of the rock proved to be good, and we both agreed that the climb was a most enjoyable one. We therefore recommend it strongly. Oak Tree Camp is only 15 minutes' walk from the Dwarsriviershoek farm (now Wentworth), and as the area is so near to Cape Town the climb can easily be done in a short week-end.

Three-quarter hour's slogging took us up to the base of the rock. We broke through the lower band of rock by the same gully as the Central Route, below the steeply-sloping grass gullies to the right of the ridge, and started climbing from the small nek on the left.

(1) 110 feet 'E': Climb up the face, working slightly to the right of the crest, then up a recessed corner and out to the right at the top.

(2) 50 feet 'E': Up the corner on the left, then to the right into a crack.

(3) Traverse 50 feet to the left along the ledge, then go up the obvious easy gully to the next ledge.

(4) 50 feet 'E': Climb up a clean corner to the left of the crest on hard rock. After scrambling up to the next band we found ourselves below the wicked-looking bulging

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\* This is in the Banhoek Kloof, above the farm Wentworth.

(Buller's Kop Frontal, cntd.)

section of the ridge.

(5) 90 feet 'F': Climb the face for 25 feet, then traverse to the right into an overhanging recess, which is climbed for 15 feet, round to the right again into a chimney with the top closed in by an overhang. Exit again to the right.

Some 'C'-scrambling leads to a broad grass ledge which separates the lower and upper sections of the ridge, and on which the party devoured a copious lunch while planning out the route above.

(6) 50 feet 'D': Scramble up on to a pedestal on the left of the crest overlooking the ravine below; this is followed by a tricky swing into the gully on the right, which exits through a wormhole.

(7) 110 feet 'E': The pitch belies its vicious appearance and is quite mild. Traverse to the right on to the face, then climb diagonally up to a small bush. From here a tricky move follows; use an unsound-looking flake which is really quite sound after all. Climb out to the right and up a rib to the top.

(8) 30 feet 'D': Up the next face to a small stance.

(9) 25 feet 'F': Work up under an overhang to the right of an obvious slit. A tricky swing takes one into the slit below a chockstone, which gives more food for thought.

(10) 50 feet 'D': Move out to the left and up the face.

About 300 feet of continuous 'B/C'-scrambling takes one to the summit ridge.

Our climbing time was 8 hours, including a long break for lunch. This can be taken as very slow, as we were in no hurry. After depositing our record in the beacon we ran down Spitzkop ravine into Banhoek Kleof and back to our camp.

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NOTES:

BULLER'S KOP: EASTERN ROUTE ('C').

Extract from an article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal,  
1933.

..... Reference was made (see description of Western Route) to the steep grass shelves below the top cliffs, and these can be worked into an extremely interesting route. The narrow cleft at the bottom can be taken, of course, as a commencement, but to keep the ascent quite distinct use can be made of an alternative line 200 or 300 yards to the right. Here, almost straight above a large clump of trees, is another vulnerable spot in the lowes kranses, and one can get up on to a steep - very steep - piece of slope. Then below obviously difficult rocks a traverse is made to the left into a delightful ravine where, at the foot of a fern-draped waterfall, are irresistible temptations to halt for morning tea.

Bush is the next obstacle, but one can struggle round at least one ledge until the lowest of the grassy shelves is attained. Upward progress is then unchecked for a long way until one finds oneself close under the main top cliffs. A pleasant alternative to toiling up the steep grass is to take to the rocks to the right, where continuous interest, without undue difficulty, can be found for a thousand feet or so. Either alternative will land one on a small shoulder in a most impressive situation.

A slight descent to the right is the natural way from here, as it leads to a series of traverses below the great crags which guard the peak on this side. Eventually one comes to a wide break where the most direct route degenerates into a plod up steep slope to finish on the saddle between the two tops of Buller's Kop.

A more attractive, if longer, alternative can be found, however, by turning up from the foot of the break into a side ravine on the left. In this ravine a belt of rock of about a hundred feet high needs to be attacked with circumspection. Above it, a pleasant ridge leads to the southern summit. Nothing more difficult than 'C' need be encountered on this route .....

BULLERSKOP: PIKADOR-RUG ('F').

Eerste bestyging: H. Graafland, G. Waldman, R. Kinsley,  
D. Lubbe.

Datum: 27 Desember 1964.

Pikador-rug is die eerste prominente rug regs van Cameron se "Eastern Route", en is duidelik sigbaar op die foto in hierdie gids. Die volgende besonderhede is deur Graafland verskaf:

Volg die pad van die hut af wat langs Eikenhof-bastion verby Volstruiskloof tot aan die voorkant van Bullerskop loop. Hierna is dit die beste om via die los klippe van die ou rotsstortings die boonste voorbrand onder Bullerskop te volg tot by die rug. Tyd: Een uur en 15 minute. Klouter tot op 'n nekkie agter 'n rotstoring. Vandaar soos volg:

(1) 90 voet 'D': Klim regs om 'n punt en dan op na 'n staanplek.

(2) 80 voet 'E': 'n Kort 'E'-beweging in die middel van die rotsmuur word uitgevoer; klim dan op na 'n staanplek.

(3) 110 voet "E inf.": Klouter tot by 'n boom onder 'n hoekige skoorsteen, en dan in die skoorsteen op.

(4) Klouter op na die volgende rotswand. Ons het eers die skoorsteen regs van die rug probeer, maar aangesien dit baie los en vuil gelyk het, het ons dit laat vaar en na die uiterste linkerkant van die rug beweeg. 'n Trajek reg op die kam het moontlik gelyk, maar ons het verder na links om die punt beweeg tot by 'n boom (20 voet 'C/D').

(5) 110 voet 'F': Klim vir 20 voet in die hoek bokant die boom op, en klim dan dwars na links vir 25 voet. Klim op en beweeg na regs terug tot in 'n klein skoorsteen met 'n boompie. Klim op in hierdie skoorsteen, beweeg dan weer na links en klim die linkerwand van 'n wye hoek tot onder 'n klein oorhang. Hier lyk dit asof 'n mens na regs beweeg om 'n bosagtige staanplek te bereik — klim egter 'n paar voet na links en dan op na 'n klein staanplekkie.

(6) 45 voet "F inf.": Beweeg na links en dan op in 'n nis vir 'n paar voet; klim daarna uit na regs by 'n struikie verby, en dan reg boontoe na 'n staanplek.

(7) 40 voet 'C/D': Klim dwars na regs verby 'n skoorsteen en verder om die punt en op na 'n staanplek.

(Pikador-rug, vervolg)

(8) 65 voet 'D': Klim reguit teen die grys rotsmuur op.

(9) 100 voet 'D': Klouter eers op na die volgende rotsmuur, en beweeg dan links na die uiterste linkerkant van die rug. Klim 80 voet al met die kam langs op en beweeg dan skuins na regs op tot by 'n boom.

(10) 100 voet "E sup.": Klim 50 voet dwars na links en dan reg boontoe na 'n staanplek.

Wanneer 'n mens bo-op die rug is, kan jy òf Cameron se "Eastern Route" afklim ('C'), òf by laasgenoemde roete aansluit, tot op die berg stap en met die 'B'-roete afklim.

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AANTEKENINGE:



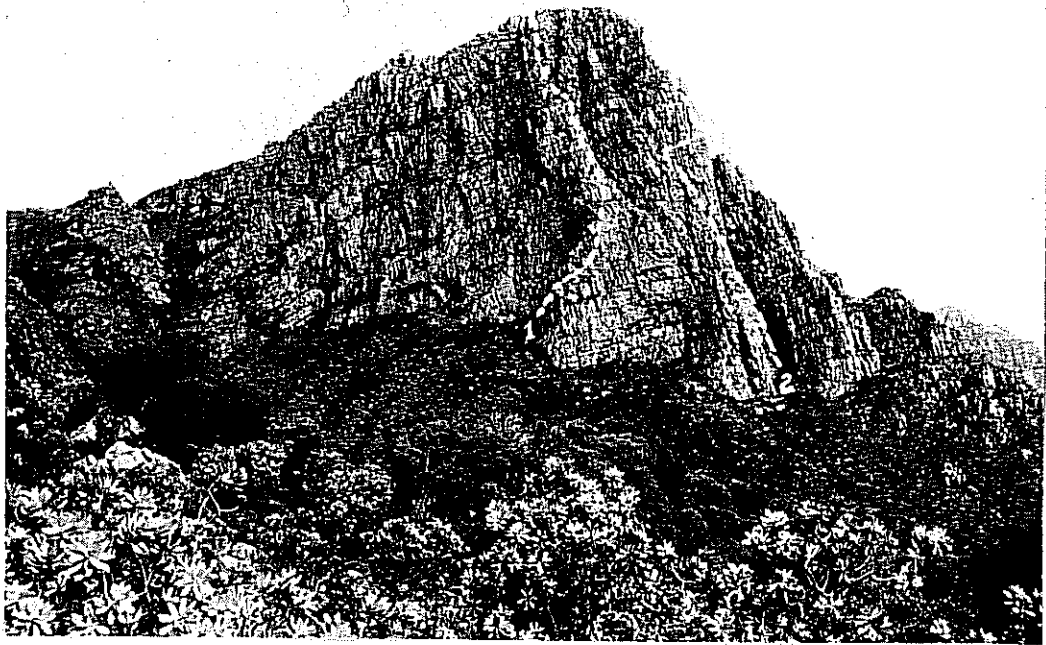
### SPITZKOP RAVINE ('A').

Extract from article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933:

... before the climber attempts anything serious in the neighbourhood, he should make himself acquainted with Spitzkop Ravine, and particularly the path up it. This is advisable to know, as it provides the only really easy route out of the Banhoek Kloof on that side, and in bad weather it is frequently useful to know of a quick way off a peak. The footpath starts up what is really a subsidiary gully on the left (western) side of the main ravine. Half-way up it crosses a narrow ridge and then leads round horizontally into Spitzkop Ravine proper. It then goes almost directly up and finishes on the irregular plateau between Buller's Kop and Spitzkop. Climbers in the vicinity should know sufficient of the topography to be able to find the upper end of this path in a mist .....

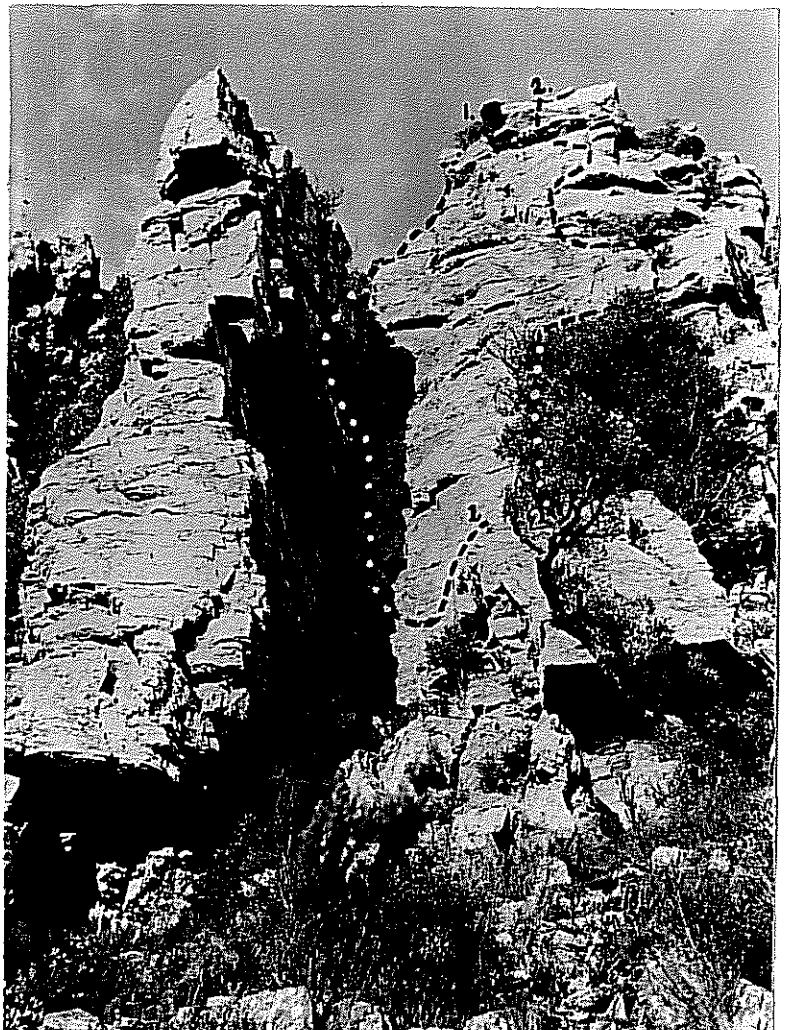
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### NOTES:



# BANHOEK SPITZKOP

1. Noordwestelike Rug.
2. Londt se Frontroete



# EERSTE TRAP, DRAGOONRIF

1. Oorspronklike  
roete
2. Variasie

BANHOEK-SPITZKOP: NOORDWESTELIKE RUG.

Benadering: Volg die kontoerpad verby die swemgat tot in Spitzkopkloof. Van Spitzkopkloof, mik na die hoek wat deur die kranse aan die noordekant van die berg gevorm word. Die klim begin sowat 100 voet van die hoek af. Reken op twee uur van die hut af tot hier. Klim skuins na regs op oor kort, maklike rotsdele, totdat 'n beboste lys bereik word. Volg hierdie lys na regs. Die eerste trajek begin sowat 30 voet van waar die lys doodloop.

(1) 20 voet "E inf.": Klim die regterkantste van twee skeure, wat nie so glad is as wat dit lyk nie. Maklike klouterwerk lei na 'n kort, moeilike rotsband wat of direk geklim of na links vermy kan word. Die volgende trajek volg onmiddellik.

(2) 25 voet "E inf.": Net links van die uitstaande hoek, waar 'n nuu spleet vir goeie vatplekke sorg. Stap op na die noordwestelike rug.

(3) 45 voet "E inf.": Klim links van die kruin van die rug op, by 'n duidelike swakplek in die verdediging. Klim dwars na regs onder die oorhang na 'n breë lys. Daar is nou 'n paar moontlikhede, waaronder maklike klouterwerk heel regs. 'n Lekker trajek is egter die volgende:

(4) 20 voet 'D': Klim op in die hoek gevorm deur 'n plat rib en die wand, sowat 15 voet van die regterkantste end van die lys. Beweeg na regs uit heel bo. 'n Stuk klouterwerk volg, en dan :

(5) 20 voet 'D': Klim op in 'n hoek net regs van die kruin van die rug. ('n Tou is nie hier nodig nie.) Nog 'n bietjie klouterwerk lei na die volgende trajek.

(6) 40 voet "E inf.": Klim eers op tussen die losstaande pilaar en die wand, stap dan oor na die platvorm in die hoek, en klim in die hoek op. 'n Nou skeur in die hoek vergemaklik sake. Beweeg bo na regs uit, waar 'n kort optrek-beweging die trajek afsluit.

(7) 30 voet "E inf.": Hierdie trajek, wat van 'n gladde skeur en die wand net regs daarvan gebruik maak, kan omseil word deur 'n maklike sig-sag trajek 'n ent na links — maar waarom sou 'n mens ? 'n Goeie vatplek teen die linkerkantste wand is vir die verbasende lae gradering verantwoordelik.

(8) 50 voet "E inf.": Oorspronklik het ons hier op die kruin van die rug begin, en ná 'n moeilike wegspring dwars

(Banhoek-Spitzkop: NW-rug)

na links geklim, na 'n rib wat na bo gelei het. 'n Maklike alternatief lê meer na links, waar 'n kraak met biesies maklik bereik kan word. Die kraak kan geklim word (tuin= maak toelaatbaar!) en lei sonder moeite na die bogenoemde rib. Vir dié wat nie bang is vir blootstelling nie, is daar die oop wand regs van dié biesie-kraak; dié is ester ietwat moeiliker.

(9) 50 voet 'E': Hierdie trajek sou ook E "inf." gewees het, was dit nie vir die wegspring nie. Die eerste trapplek is naamlik op maaghoogte, waarna 'n paar balansbewegings nodig is om makliker terrein te bereik. Die res is voor die hand liggend. 'n 'Skouer' sal natuurlik al die verskil maak .... (Hierdie trajek kan omgestap word, maar aangesien dit die lekkerste trajek op die klim is, sou dit sonde wees om dit te doen.)

Nog sowat 40 minute se klouter en klim na die kruin van die berg, en dan kan 'n lekker billie tee op die waterryke vlaktes ten ooste van die berg gemaak word. Pas tog net op vir brand.

Eerste bestyging: Dr. J. Ver Loren van Themaat, R. Watson, W. Voigt, R. Meyer, E. Lotz.

Datum: 13 Desember 1964.

Verbeterings deur H. Meyer, E. Lotz, Barbara von Wechmar en Daleen Stander, 2 Januarie 1965.

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## SPITZKOP FRONTAL.

Description of first ascent, by A.J. Conacher, M.C.S.A.  
Journal, 1921:

'I vill take you for vun kvid!' Thus spake the owner of the cab at Stellenbosch at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, the 28th of May, when Londt, Berrisford and the writer inquired the cost of a lift as far as Mr. Buller's farm at the entrance to Banhoek Kloof. This seemed very reasonable, probably owing to the fact that each of us had two weighty rucksacks.

Morton, the fourth member of the party, was not expected until evening. Fortunately, before leaving Stellenbosch, we remembered that he had charge of the milk supply, so we stopped in the town to buy a tin to help us through till he joined us.

From Stellenbosch to Dwarsriviershoek (the name of Mr. Buller's farm) over the Helshoogte Pass, is a delightful drive, and we enjoyed it to the full. Our worthy Jehu was very talkative and informed us that he drove ALL the mountaineers who visited that district. His knowledge of the names of the peaks within sight was lamentably poor but he gave us full details of all the accidents which had occurred on the mountains in that region since the year dot.

On arriving at the farmhouse, it was found to be closed up and all the blinds drawn; obviously, we couldn't ask permission of an owner who was absent from home, so we proceeded on our way after arranging with the driver to meet Morton at the station in Stellenbosch and bring him as far as the top of the Pass.

Passing the spot where the Club camped in January we made for a conspicuous clump of oaks a short distance up the kloof. One immense tree forms an ideal place for a camp, giving plenty of shade and head-room; there is dry wood in abundance and water is quite near by, while sufficient slang-bosch for bedding can soon be collected. We reached this spot at half-past four and immediately proceeded to fix up our 'bivvy' and make the place home-like. This accomplished, we ascended an adjacent kopje to get a better view of our first objective, Spitzkop, a prominent peak on the left side of Banhoek Kloof. A thorough inspection of this peak revealed an apparently good route up its front; its feasibility or otherwise would have to be proved the next day. Returning to camp we had supper, darkness setting in while

(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

we were thus engaged.

Time passed swiftly until 8.30, when B. and the writer departed to go and meet Morton, leaving Londt to "mind the house".

We reached the top of the Pass before the cart which was bringing Morton, although we could hear the horses coming up but still a good distance off, so we squatted against a bank to await their arrival. They arrived not long afterwards but Morton didn't alight at once, and we kept doggo to see what he would do as the locality was strange to him, but when we heard him say, 'If they don't turn up I'll drink all the condensed milk', we decided to show ourselves.

At 9.30 next morning B., L. and the writer set out for Spitzkop. After following the left bank for about twenty minutes we crossed the stream and proceeded along the slopes on the opposite bank. An hour's walking brought us to the lowest point of rock (1500 feet) and we immediately commenced climbing.

Baboons had been constantly barking at us while on our way up the kloof, but although we stopped several times to try we never could see any; even while climbing we had frequent reminders of the fact that we were being watched.

When some hundred feet or more of rock was below us a movement to the left was made, ending in the wide grassy gully which is plainly visible from the camping place and which is almost in the centre of the face. Two waterfalls form the upper part of this gully, and it was decided to climb the one on the left, a beacon being built to mark our start.

The climbing was interesting straight away; for a 150 feet or more the chimney, into which the waterfall had developed, provided just good climbing; after that it proved tricky for the holds were few and rounded, several places requiring far more balance than strength or reach. At length the chimney closed in, forcing us on to the face on the right. After ascending this for nearly 50 feet a traverse to the right across a gully was made. This was not the gully which dropped onto the slopes below but was a branch from the one which we had climbed.

Our traverse landed us on the central buttress of Spitzkop; another beacon was built on a ledge there and the



(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

climbing was sensational and sufficiently difficult to warrant only one man moving at a time.

About 100 feet above the ledge an overhanging rock was encountered which was circumvented by a move to the right into a water-chute minus the water; a detached flake gave a splendid belay 50 feet further up and made further progress safe. Once out of this chute we returned to the centre of the buttress immediately above a pinnacle, the base of which was the overhang mentioned before. Then followed nearly 100 feet of face work with comfortable holds, the only outstanding point of interest occurring when a crack between two boulders was reached. Londt was above it when I got there and he turned round to watch my efforts.

The crack was too wide to jamb a foot into and too narrow to get one's body into; it was only between seven and eight feet high but a chockstone was jambed in the top and the only hold below was a small stone wedged in underneath the chockstone; one hand was useless until it could reach the back of the latter. Londt grinned in a most tantalising way as I tried first one way and then another, which goes to prove that he also found the tricky place tricky. A fall from this place would have meant a drop of nearly 500 feet, so that the rope, although scorned as a hold, was a necessary safeguard. However, I got up eventually, but was denied the pleasure of grinning at Berrisford; he came up the crack and, thanks to his length, simply put his hand over the chockstone and heaved himself up!

A little higher up we reached a bulge which barred further direct progress. A reconnaissance was made first to the right of this bulge, and then to the left; the rock on the right looked possible but uninviting, as one could not see what was beyond. The opposite side gave access to a narrow bush-choked gully which looked as if its upper portion would prove a tough opposition.

This route looked more feasible than the other so our leader climbed into the gully until a small cave-like recess was reached; No. 2 joined him there, and then No. 1, after exchanging his boots for rubber shoes, essayed the upper regions of the gully. The second man, wedged into the small cave and keeping as far back as possible, could hear vague mutterings and deep breaths from above, and saw numerous

(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

while the rope ran out almost inch by inch. After a while the rope ceased its upwards course and eventually began to come back, the leader, owing to the absence of holds, having failed to get past the overhanging rocks at the head of the gully. When he had rested a little No. 1 inspected the corner on the left but this appeared positively hopeless.

The only alternative was a traverse to the corner on the right; from the gully the rocks seemed climbable, but no more, and what would we found on reaching the corner we none of us could say. However, our leader went to investigate; to get there he first of all had to climb a chimney in which were two huge flakes and several smaller fragments of loose rock. Delicate footwork was necessary because the third man was directly underneath this chimney and would very likely have stopped something had the leader dislodged these fragments.

Owing to his short reach the first man had to use one of the flakes as a handhold; No. 2 shuddered when he heard a scrunch as it moved, but luckily it only moved an inch or so and then jammed securely. The top of the chimney was closed in by the overhanging rock and this made it awkward to get on to the top of the boulder on the right, the rock above tending to force one outwards. By facing outwards and placing both feet on the right-hand side of the chimney, slightly in advance of the body, and maintaining one's balance by placing a hand on each side of the chimney, a push with the right hand threw one far enough over to grasp the top of the boulder; once on top of this a narrow ledge led around the corner. The two "followers" rather anxiously awaited No. 1's report and it was gratifying to hear him shout "All right!" The third man then came up to the cave and No. 2 followed the first man.

On reaching the chimney one of the loose fragments was sent away and it left an excellent foothold, high enough to enable one to reach a handhold on the rock clear of the loose flakes. One of the latter, though, had to be used as a foothold as one got a bit higher.

At the corner a splendid belay was found in the shape of a tooth of rock; No. 1 had threaded the rope through behind it while the others were moving and the next man used it, while the first ascended the face which followed.

The ledge was about 10 feet long by 18 inches broad.



(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

and its situation enabled us to look directly down on all the beacons we had built on that buttress.

Before bringing the last man on to the ledge it was thought advisable for No. 1 to get off it.

The face above rose sheer for 40 feet, the rock was smooth and the holds were none too plentiful, but with rubber shoes one could take advantage of the smallest; in one place the holds were very far apart and it was only by maintaining perfect balance that one dared to move a hand upwards to reach the next hold.

A broad ledge was reached at the top of this face and we stopped here to eat some raisins and take a drink of water and also to put our boots on again. Continuing we climbed into a wide gully on the right, and followed it for some distance, the climbing being simple except at one point where a smooth, water-worn rock had to be surmounted.

The next move was on to the buttress on the right. The rocks overlooking the gully were climbed for 70 feet, followed by a walk along a broad ledge to the front of the buttress, where the next problem was encountered, consisting of a smooth rock with the first hold nearly six feet up, and the next one three feet higher; this was overcome with the aid of the next man, the last one using the rope as a hold.

Easy rocks led to the next point of difficulty, which was a narrow chimney, about 40 feet high, closed at the top. The actual chimney was nothing very hard to climb, but to get hold one had to climb backwards and grasp the outside edge of the boulder which formed the roof; by raising the feet to a higher hold inside the chimney and bringing one's body to an almost horizontal position, the arms could be stretched out until the top of the 'roof' was grasped, the feet were then allowed to swing out and the arms only were used to draw one's body up until the right knee could reach a hold at the top of the chimney, on the outside.

The next pitch was also a chimney, with a chockstone at the top, but with a 'wormhole' behind the stone. This chimney started from a ledge about 20 feet above the last and was far more difficult to climb. No. 1 waited on the ledge till No. 2 had joined him and hauled the bags up before starting the chimney. On reaching the wormhole the leader shouted that he would have to dislodge a loose stone, so the

(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

The number of stones which came out would have filled a scotch-cart, the one which he had moved had been holding up umpteen others; luckily there was room enough for them to pass between his body and the rock, or we might have had to dig him out.

While the shower of stones continued No. 2 was hugging the rock to one side of the bottom of the chimney and escaped injury, but the two rucksacks suffered many a blow, fortunately without being knocked off the ledge. Two or three minutes later another lot of stones came down, but everyone was on the alert, so no damage was done.

When No. 2 reached the chockstone one foot jammed in a hole, and No. 3 enjoyed the spectacle of a fellow "dassie" hanging on by his hands while he kicked one foot clear with the other. This accomplished we proceeded, and all were soon through the hole above which were piled hundreds of small stones just needing a push to send them all flying through space.

Serious climbing was now finished and all that remained was to negotiate some 300 feet of easy scrambling to the summit.

There are two 'Spitzes' on this berg and we visited the lower en route to the upper, building a small beacon on the former before descending to the nek connecting it with the true summit.

The beacon (4100 feet) was reached at 5.15 p.m., and while resting we enjoyed a fine view of the surrounding mountains.

Franschhoek Range was only a few miles away, but the peaks which dominated the view were the Jonkershoek Twins, which are just on the other side of Banhoek Kloof. Our training ground, Table Mountain, was also clearly visible.

On opening the rucksacks all the tins containing food were found to be 'suffering from shock' consequent upon the bombardment they had received at the foot of the last chimney. We ate all the food we had and wished the water bottle was a barrel.

No record tin was found in the beacon so an aluminium jam pot (very much dented) was made to serve, our record being placed therein and deposited in the beacon.

Leaving the summit at a quarter to six we made for the head of a kloof to the north-east (i.e. Spitzkop Ravine)

(Spitzkop Frontal, cntd.)

and descended that into Banhoek Kloof.

Darkness set in before we reached the latter but electric torches are worth carrying, and, keeping on the right-hand bank of the stream, we followed various tracks (real and imaginary) until right opposite the camp, as marked by Morton's fire, when we struck across.

Camp was regained at ten minutes past seven. A wash in the icy-cold water of the stream was soon followed by supper, and shortly afterwards we disposed ourselves to rest, feeling that we had earned it.

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### SPITZKOP SOUTH RIDGE.

Extract from article by K. Cameron, M.C.S.A. Journal, 1933:

..... On the right (east) of the ravine is Spitzkop itself — a most handsome peak and whose summit is unsurpassed as a viewpoint. Direct ascent of the southern front has been accomplished but is exceedingly difficult, the route lying mainly up a combination of deep gullies which sear the cliffs facing south-west (the Frontal Route). A less severe, but nevertheless interesting, way can be followed up the prominent south ridge of the peak until it suddenly steepens and its appearance becomes most uninviting to the average climber. A long slightly descending traverse to the right is the solution, but one has to go a good half mile before upward progress can be resumed. There the kranses break back at one place, and a 'B' route can be evolved with a little ingenuity. It leads on to the plateau to the right (east) of Spitzkop. The remainder of the ascent of the peak presents no technical difficulties but there are numerous rock pitches on which interest can be sustained.....

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